

JAMES J. F. FOREST, EDITOR

Essentials of Counterterrorism



PRAEGER SECURITY INTERNATIONAL TEXTBOOK

Essentials of Counterterrorism

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Essentials of Counterterrorism

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Preface

THE PRIMARY GOAL OF THIS TEXTBOOK IS to help educate future counterterrorism professionals enrolled in university courses and training programs. Contributors to the book have sought to minimize the use of jargon or convoluted theories, and instead focus on plain language and lessons we should learn from the rich, scholarly literature in the study of terrorism and counterterrorism. This literature is multidisciplinary in nature, drawing from political science, sociology, economics, history, psychology, and many others. Thus, the chapter authors represent a broad diversity of backgrounds, including retired and active duty military, intelligence and law enforcement officers, and research scholars at universities and think tanks. This is also an international collection of authors, only half of whom are from the United States. Finally, it should be noted that most of the chapters contained herein were originally published as part of the more comprehensive three-volume set *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century* (Praeger Security International, 2007), and have been updated for this publication.

The volume begins with an introductory chapter identifying central themes in the study of terrorism and counterterrorism. After reviewing some history and conceptual frameworks in the study of terrorism, the analysis examines the complexities of counterterrorism policies, strategies, and operations, focusing on the primary elements of a nation's power: the use of force by military and law enforcement, and the supporting roles of diplomatic, information, economic, financial, and intelligence activities (with special attention given to the latter). Responding successfully to the threat of terrorism requires extensive integration of all these elements into a comprehensive strategy, and necessitates the involvement of a complex array of government agencies and personnel. Finally, the chapter concludes that in the future, some terrorists will become more sophisticated in their tactics, support operations, and communication, and therefore we

must be prepared to respond with increasingly sophisticated counterterrorism strategies.

The chapters in Part One of the textbook advance our understanding of counterterrorism strategy challenges, as well as raise important questions and issues for further research. In the first chapter, Jennifer Holmes of the University of Texas at Dallas examines the tension between an aggressive, preemptive investigative response to terrorism and a response that restricts government activity to safeguard individual liberties. She argues that the state needs to be strong enough to have a functioning judicial system, discourage the emergence of violence, mount a vigorous defense, and maintain citizen support. However, good intelligence, effective coordination, and a competent police and judiciary cannot alone squash internal terrorism with a significant domestic source of support. In this case, the political realm of the conflict is extremely important. Moreover, being responsive to understandable grievances may increase the government's popular support and decrease overt and tacit support for terrorists. Overall, creating an effective intelligence community, increasing security, and maintaining principles of good governance are essential to democracies confronting terrorism. The greatest threat to progress is impatience, which increases the temptation to emphasize one aspect of a strategy in the short term. Lopsided efforts will not bring long-term success, she concludes, and may undermine the chances of a long-term, comprehensive peace.

In the second chapter of this section, Christopher Jasparro of the U.S. Naval War College illustrates how analyses of sociodemographic and geographic trends can yield important insights for countering terrorism. He writes that "the application of geographic perspectives provide a means for visualizing, organizing, and assessing real world data (that can otherwise inundate essential information with a deluge of detail) thereby elucidating important spatial patterns and structures." In other words, he suggests that by knowing what areas produce the most terrorists and their supporters, combined with an understanding of where sociodemographic factors play particularly significant roles in facilitating terrorism (and how terrorist organizations exploit these factors from place to place), "we can more precisely and efficiently focus our resources and approaches instead of being constrained by 'one-size-fits-all' responses geared to addressing broad issues (poverty, for instance) whose effectiveness is difficult, if not impossible, to measure." He also suggests that countering an ideology requires determining where a message originates from, along what paths it has diffused, and how the conditions by which it resonates vary from place to place. More specifically, precision in reducing the effect of socio-cultural and demographic "root causes" that give extreme ideologies

their resonance demands that we distinguish between universal and place-specific forces of radicalization.

Next, Daniel Byman, a professor at Georgetown University, notes that state sponsorship of terrorism is a complex problem that cannot easily be solved. Despite diplomatic protests, economic sanctions, and even military pressure, Iran, Pakistan, and Syria have supported numerous terrorist groups for decades. Their persistence in the face of pressure suggests that cutting the deadly connection between states and terrorist groups is difficult at best and impossible at worst. However, careful policymakers can design better solutions and avoid many common mistakes that can make the problem of state sponsorship worse. To begin with, he observes, it is easier to stop state support for terrorism before it starts than to halt backing after it begins. Thus, one of the greatest challenges to the international community is preventing the rise of new Talibans or other regimes that see supporting terrorism as ideologically vital. Creating a strong norm against the sponsorship of terrorism both makes states less likely to engage in it in the first place and enables the victim state to respond more easily. Diplomatically, this requires engaging both allies and other states on these issues before the support for terrorism becomes well established. In addition, it demands that the United States and other countries offer would-be sponsors alternatives to terrorism, such as giving them options at the negotiating table. Also, he concludes, creating standards is vital with regard to the problem of passive state sponsorship of terrorist organizations.

Next, Professor Paul Smith of the U.S. Naval War College examines the financial aspects of terrorism and counterterrorism. During the past decade, and particularly since 1999, a flurry of regulations and laws have been implemented throughout the world that focus primarily on terrorism financing. In fact, some observers might suggest that the “financial oxygen” that sustains terrorist activity is nearly depleted. Unfortunately, however, terrorists are extremely versatile and creative. They are reverting to more fundamental methods of transferring money, such as enlisting informal value transfer systems, engaging in bulk cash smuggling, or simply transferring “value” anonymously via e-cash (or e-gold) on the Internet. Further, as money-laundering regimes become more advanced in rich, developed countries (and even moderately wealthy developing countries), terrorist organizations always have the option of turning to “less governed spaces”—in other words, operating in those areas of the world outside the purview of governments and financial regulators. Smith concludes that since terrorism is a complex political phenomenon that cannot be simply eliminated by starving terrorists of their money, countering terrorism in the long term will require that governments honestly and forthrightly take

on those sensitive questions or issues that provide the “political oxygen” of international terrorism. Unless that reality is confronted honestly, terrorists will always find a way to fund their operations.

The financial dimensions of global terrorism are also addressed in the next chapter, authored by Joseph St. Marie and Shahdad Naghshpour of the University of Southern Mississippi, and Samuel Stanton Jr. of Grove City College. They examine the role of the “shadow economy” (economic activities that are underground, covert, or illegal) in the global spread of terrorism; specifically, the theory behind the shadow economy and the effects it can have on terrorist organizations with regard to financing. Their analysis indicates that the shadow economy can provide an infrastructure for terrorist organizations to operate in, whereby financing becomes easier and detecting it becomes more difficult. The irony for most nations’ decision makers is that public policy decisions intended to create a better quality of life—such as a social security system that collects contributions through taxes and then provides a basic human security “safety net” for all its citizens—may actually create an infrastructure where terror organizations can operate, finance themselves, and carry out attacks against the very sociopolitical system that unwittingly supports them. A comprehensive approach to combating terrorism thus requires significant monitoring of—and law enforcement interdiction efforts within—the shadow economy.

And in the final chapter of this section, British counterterrorism expert J. P. Larsson examines the conceptual intersections of terrorism and organized criminal networks. Despite the common means and methods shared by terrorists and criminal organizations, the traditional view of law enforcement has been to treat the two as completely distinct and separate, and this has in turn led to two disparate responses by government bodies, law enforcement agencies, and academic scholarship. However, the way to combat both terrorism and organized crime may be to treat them as very similar concepts. Larsson begins by offering a brief overview of organized crime, taken quite separate from terrorism, and then explores some of the similarities between them, how the two interact, and what the law enforcement response is and can be. Finally, he provides some thoughts about how both terrorism and organized crime can be countered in the 21st century.

In Part Two of the volume, we turn our attention to tactical and operational dimensions of counterterrorism, beginning with a chapter on counterterrorism intelligence by professor Jennifer E. Sims (currently at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs). She first explains what history can tell us about the core features of past counterintelligence missions that have

been successful against transnational groups. The discussion then turns to address the new features of the modern conflict that are changing the nature of the tradecraft needed to defeat terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and associated groups. A key premise of her chapter is that one cannot evaluate an intelligence effort without identifying the nature of the competition, including the adversary and his strategy. This is because intelligence, at its core, is less about getting facts right or wrong than providing competitive advantages in foresight and situational awareness to decision makers. To some extent, she notes, the techniques that have worked in the past will remain important, including human intelligence from infiltration agents, all-source data fusion (phone intercepts and human agents, for example), and collaboration with law enforcement worldwide. The ability of the federal government to conduct double agent and deception operations should be improved and will necessarily have to be coordinated with overseas partners. Finally, she advocates for greater collaboration between the federal government and local agencies, intelligence liaison with foreign governments, and outreach to universities.

In the next chapter, Michael Kraft (a former senior advisor in the U.S. State Department Counterterrorism Office) describes the U.S. government's counterterrorism research and development programs. Dozens of federal agencies are working to develop a wide variety of equipment and tools, and millions of dollars go into developing devices and methods to detect conventional explosives (as well as biological, chemical, and radiological weapons) before they can cause mass casualties. These initiatives are intended to save lives by either helping prevent terrorist attacks or minimizing the damage if they do take place. Kraft provides an overview of the development of the government's testing and evaluation programs, describes the major coordinating groups—particularly the interagency coordinating body, the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG)—and offers an illustrative sampling of some of the individual agency programs. He observes a need for research in new subject areas, such as detecting improvised explosive devices, as well as improvements in older systems, including airport X-ray machines and scanners. Further, the organizational framework for these initiatives has changed and continues to evolve, most markedly since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and there is a significant need for more effective coordination and working relationships between the TSWG and DHS. Overall, the chapters of this section provide an interesting review of important strategic and policy challenges for countering terrorism in the 21st century.

And in the final chapter of this section—co-authored by Robert Pauly Jr. of the University of Southern Mississippi and U.S. Army Special Forces

officer Robert Redding—describes how the use of civil military operations and confidence-building measures among villagers at the local level can assist the United States and its domestic allies in minimizing support for Al Qaeda and its affiliates in a given state under reconstruction. There are many examples across the world that demonstrate the growing role of U.S. military special forces (active duty and reserve units alike) in microlevel civil-military operations designed to achieve progress in the global fight against terrorism one village or town at a time, in places ranging geographically from Iraq and Yemen to Mongolia and the Philippines. This chapter examines these types of operations and the grand strategy upon which they are based. The first part of their discussion provides a conceptual overview of the use of civil military operations to achieve strategic objectives. This is followed by an analysis of civil military operations in the context of the U.S. counterterrorism strategy in particular. The third section examines case studies of U.S.-led civil military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines, followed by an examination of the insights that U.S. policymakers should draw from these case studies. The concluding section provides some observations on the prospects for the future of the use of civil military operations by the United States and its allies.

Part Three of this textbook provides eight case studies from which students and scholars can draw useful lessons and insights that help inform new ideas for counterterrorism and further the study of critical challenges in the global security environment. In the first of these, David Scott Palmer of Boston University examines the case of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru. Beginning in May 1980, the government of Peru faced the first attacks from a Maoist insurgency originating in the Andean highlands known as Shining Path, attacks that expanded dramatically over the following decade. By 1990, more than 20,000 Peruvians had been killed, US\$10 billion of infrastructure had been damaged or destroyed, and some 900,000 internal refugees and emigrants had fled their homes. After an abbreviated account of the rise and fall of Shining Path, Palmer discusses the conditions contributing to the initial formation and growth of the insurgency, the largely counterproductive responses by the Peruvian government and its security forces, and the key elements of the major strategic and tactical overhaul that turned the tables on the insurgents. His conclusion draws together the lessons to be learned as to how a guerrilla movement could come close to succeeding, as well as how a besieged government could overcome the threat—lessons of possible use to other governments in the formulation of their own counterterrorism policies and strategies.

This is followed by another case study from Latin America, in which Román Ortiz and Janneth Vargas examine the Colombian government's

long struggle against insurgency and terrorism. They describe how the military's force structure and counterinsurgency doctrine have changed over the past 60 years, beginning with a quick look at Colombia's response to the outburst of sectarian violence that shook the country during the 1950s. This is followed by analysis of civil-military relations doctrine instituted through the 1960s, and the rise of modern insurgent movements across the country during the 1970s and 1980s, including the ELN and FARC. Then they describe how changes in civil-military relations during the early 1990s affected counterinsurgency strategy. Finally, they explain how military reforms and policies implemented by the Uribe administration and by the Santos administration have led to a gradual strategic bankruptcy of the guerrilla movements in Colombia.

Next, Erica Chenoweth of the University of Denver examines one of the most durable and evasive terrorist groups of the 1970s and 1980s in Italy—the Red Brigades. Her investigation into the history of this group illuminates the successes and failures of the Italian government in confronting the Red Brigades, providing several observations that should inform current U.S. policy in fighting terrorism. For example, Italian counterterrorism efforts initially failed because of shadowy complicity between elements of the state and right-wing terrorism; refusal of the government to acknowledge the destructive potential of the Red Brigades; knee-jerk reactions resulting in undemocratic policies, which raised some ethical considerations; and a failure to appreciate the escalatory effects of intergroup rivalries among terrorist groups. However, according to Chenoweth, the eventual successes of Italian counterterrorism included a unification of intelligence units and a coordination of their activities; creation of special commando forces with training in hostage crises; and finally, the introduction of policies that exploited internal divisions within the Red Brigades and led to the defection of many members.

This is followed by a case study of another prominent European terrorist group—West Germany's Red Army Faction (RAF, a.k.a. the Baader Meinhof Group)—authored by Joanne Wright, at the University of Queensland. She explains how examining the RAF, its motivating ideology, and particularly the West German government's counterterrorism policies can provide valuable lessons and insights into 21st-century terrorism. This case illustrates, for example, how a relatively small and seemingly irrational group can create a physical and psychological impact way out of proportion to its size and threat. Perhaps even more usefully, it can illustrate that whatever sympathy terrorist groups do manage to generate among national and international audiences is largely derived from government responses to terrorism. Her chapter suggests that the RAF was able to gen-

erate some degree of success and attach some degree of credibility to its analysis of a repressive state in three areas: security force behavior, prisoners and prison conditions, and legislative changes. Overall, the West German experience highlights the need to review the impact of policies on the motivations and support of terror groups within a society.

Next, Francesco Cavatorta of Dublin City University examines the impact of democratization on reducing the appeal of extremist groups in North Africa and the Middle East. He begins by noting that “any analysis of this region today concludes that the salient trait is the complete absence of democratic governance in all the Arab countries. While this authoritarianism in the different countries varies in terms of intensity, few doubts exist about its persistence and pervasiveness.” He then examines in some detail the relationship between democratization and political violence in the region and analyzes several different but interrelated aspects of such a complex relationship. First, he argues that processes of democratization in the region have largely failed due to the controversial nature of the principal opposition to the authoritarian elites in virtually all of the countries. Second, he challenges the assumption that democratization will inevitably reduce the appeal of extremist groups, if we equate extremism with the use of violence. The relegitimization of state authority in the Middle East and North Africa through the adoption of democratic procedures is certainly a necessary first step to stem the wave of radicalism that is engulfing the region. However, he argues, it would probably only be effective in moderating those groups that have “extremist” ideas but are already committed to pursuing their goals through nonviolent means. Finally, his chapter offers some recommendations on how the international community could help bring about not only a more democratic region, but also a more “just” international system.

Then former Indian Army officer Behram Sahukar examines the origins of the security challenges in Kashmir and the role of Pakistan in sponsoring or supporting Islamic militant groups engaged in terrorist attacks. He explains how the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 made Pakistan a frontline state in the U.S.-funded jihad against the Soviet Union, and the infusion of CIA-funded arms, equipment, and other forms of support into Pakistan gave a perception of legitimacy to religious extremists who believed they were fighting an Islamic holy war. The end of the Afghan jihad in 1989 left Pakistan flooded with surplus arms and equipment, as well as a cadre of extremist fighters with experience in a prolonged, low-intensity conflict. Mujahideen who had completed their successful mission against the Soviets were diverted to Kashmir to continue their fight for Islam in Kashmir against “infidel” Hindu India. Since 1989, separatist violence in

Kashmir has been backed by a radical Islamist ideology that aims to annex Kashmir to Pakistan and extend Islamic rule over India. Pakistan considers the issue of Kashmir as the “unfinished agenda of partition,” and remains in occupation of one-third of the Indian state. It has tried to take the rest of the state by force several times in the past and failed. Sahukar concludes that while both sides realize that continued hostility and acrimony is counterproductive to the peace and stability of the region, the jihadi factor and the anti-India military in Pakistan continues to be a hindrance to any lasting peaceful solution to Kashmir.

Next, Vienna-based international terrorism expert Robert Wesley describes the hunt for Khalid Sheik Mohammad, the tactical mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks, who was captured on March 3, 2003, in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi. This chapter highlights the complex process that led to his detainment and the lessons underlined by this process. His capture serves to emphasize how the United States will be operating in the future to ensure continued progress in disrupting both the traditional leadership and those who replace them. Mohammad’s case study allows for reflection on several counterterrorism issues likely to have an impact on the future of this global conflict. For example, governments must recognize the importance of developing strong international partnering relationships; harnessing the core competencies of joint operations, involving U.S. and host-country organizations; creating and exploiting actionable intelligence; identifying and provoking security mistakes by Al Qaeda operatives; and targeting “partner organizations” of Al Qaeda.

And the final case study is provided by Rogelio Alonso of King Juan Carlos University, in which he examines the terrorist attacks of March 11, 2004, in Madrid. Although Spain had been constantly targeted by various types of terrorism since the late 1960s, violence from the ethnonationalist Basque terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA, or Basque Fatherland and Freedom) being by far the most intense, never before had a terrorist attack in the country been so indiscriminate and lethal. On that day, 10 bombs planted in four different trains filled with thousands of commuters on their way to Madrid were detonated between 7:37 and 7:40 A.M., killing 191 people. As it would soon emerge, the killings on March 11 were carried out by a group of Islamist terrorists, some of whom were closely linked to individuals who were also part of the Al Qaeda network. The chapter examines the events that led to this terrorist attack, analyzing how and why such an atrocity was perpetrated as well as its implications for counterterrorism in the country, and concludes with an analysis of the main counterterrorism measures implemented as a response to this tragedy.

As a collection, these chapters complement each other in highlighting critical issues that transcend the many differences in history, culture, and experience that occur among nations. Lessons learned in counterterrorism policies and practices in different countries can certainly inform our efforts here in the United States—indeed, there is much that any single country can learn from the experience of others in how to meet common security challenges in new and increasingly successful ways. Further, while it is important to review cases where governments have had success, it also vital to examine instances where things did not go so well for the government, or the terrorists actually succeeded in carrying out their deadly mission. Finally, a central goal of this textbook is to stimulate readers to pursue further research on how military, law enforcement, diplomacy, and intelligence professionals around the world should respond to terrorism in the 21st century. In the final analysis, there is still much to be done to expand our collective understanding of terrorism and how we can fight it with increasing sophistication and success.

Disclaimer

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not purport to reflect the position of the Joint Special Operations University, U.S. Special Operations Command, the Department of Defense, the Directorate of National Intelligence, the Department of Homeland Security, or any other U.S. government organization.

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IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO PUBLISH this textbook without expressing the debt of gratitude I owe to so many people who have contributed to my understanding of counterterrorism. Indeed, it has taken many years, and the contribution of many people, to make a book like this possible. To begin with, I am most grateful for what I have learned (and continue to learn every day) from the colleagues I have worked with at the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point, Joint Special Operations University, the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and elsewhere. Throughout this professional journey I have gained invaluable knowledge from a great many people serving in military, intelligence, and law enforcement organizations throughout the world. Thousands of scholars, researchers, and nongovernmental organizations have provided tons of data, conceptual frameworks, and insights that have been exceedingly helpful to me. And I have learned a great deal from my students, especially those with real-world experiences to share.

Of course, my family has been a constant source of support and inspiration, and I thank them for their encouragement and patience. Finally, I wish to dedicate this textbook to a terrific mentor and friend, Brigadier General (ret.) Russell Howard, and to the legacy of a man we both greatly admired, General (ret.) Wayne Downing, who served as our Distinguished Chair of the CTC until his sudden passing in 2007. Both of them made a tremendous impact on the education and training of U.S. Special Operations Forces, and I can only hope that the fruits of this academic enterprise will honor them for many years to come.

James J. F. Forest, PhD
Roberts Cove, NH
May 2015

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An Introduction to the Study of Counterterrorism

James J. F. Forest

TERRORISM IS A COMPLEX PHENOMENON, as scores of recent events and scholarly publications have illustrated. It is therefore unsurprising that widespread consensus on a definition of terrorism has proven elusive, not only internationally but even among government agencies within the United States. For example, from the U.S. Department of State's view the term *terrorism* means "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."¹ Meanwhile, the Department of Justice defines terrorism as "the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."² The distinction that the Department of State makes in referring to "politically motivated violence" is an important one, as terrorism is often described as a form of collective violence that is politically motivated.

According to political scientist David Rapoport, "Terror is violence with distinctive properties used for political purposes both by private parties and states. That violence is unregulated by publicly accepted norms to contain violence, the rules of war and the rules of punishment."³ Louise Richardson explains that terrorist organizations have a political objective that they seek to obtain through violence or the threat of violence, and that the use of this violence is not to defeat the enemy but to send a message

through violent acts of symbolic significance that gain maximum attention to a cause.⁴ The strategies and tactics of violent coercion have been used by individuals pursuing goals of anticolonial revolution; establishing a geopolitically separate identity (often referred to as ethnonational self-determination); the cessation of animal testing or deforestation; outlawing abortion; or subjugating members of another race, ethnicity, or religion—goals that are all related to politics and power.

Cindy Combs refers to terrorism as “a synthesis of war and theatre: a dramatization of violence which is perpetrated on innocent victims and played before an audience in the hope of creating a mode of fear without apology or remorse for political purposes.”⁵ And Bruce Hoffman, one of the most internationally respected scholars in this field, defines terrorism as “the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change. . . [It is] designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of the terrorist attack . . . [and] to create power where there is none or to consolidate power where there is very little.”⁶ Hoffman also notes that certain aspects of various terrorism definitions are fundamental: most definitions of terrorism include some political dimension, usually a desire to bring about (or sometimes prevent) political change. Finally, a central tenet among most descriptions and definitions of terrorism is the notion that those who engage in it intentionally target innocents (including off-duty military, law enforcement, or other government officials), and they seek to cause psychological trauma as much as (if not more than) death and damage.

Given the broad diversity of perspectives toward terrorism, there should be no surprise that understanding counterterrorism can be equally complex. Counterterrorism might be defined simply as the collection of strategies and tactics that seek to thwart terrorism. However, this definition masks a significant diversity among those strategies and tactics. Indeed, over the last few centuries, we have seen governments respond to terrorism in a wide variety of ways (sometimes successful, sometimes not), and there exists an increasing wealth of scholarly research on the strategies and practices they employed, often addressing questions of effectiveness, efficiency, and ethics.

Alex Schmid provides a more detailed definition of counterterrorism as “a proactive effort to prevent, deter, and combat politically motivated violence directed at civilian and non-combatant targets, by the use of a broad spectrum of response measures—law enforcement, political, psychological, social, economic and paramilitary.”⁷ The complexity of counterterrorism is illustrated by the myriad ways in which these different response

measures can be used, either separately or combined as components of a comprehensive security strategy. As a result, there exists no universal theory on “what works” and what does not in counterterrorism. Further, there is often a danger of political bias in research and analysis of counterterrorism, creating even greater diversity of opinions and disagreements in the scholarly literature.

What we do know is that because terrorism is a very contextual phenomenon, a counterterrorism strategy must be tailored to address the specific contexts, actions, and impacts of a particular terrorist threat. From this perspective, there can be any number of answers to central questions like “What policies and actions contribute to successfully countering terrorism, and how do we know? What can we learn from history about how effective counterterrorism strategies and tactics used in one context can be applied in another?” These are the kinds of questions addressed throughout the chapters of *Essentials of Counterterrorism*.

The underlying reasons for studying counterterrorism are fairly straightforward. Terrorism is an exclusively human endeavor (in the sense that no other species of animal on the planet engages in what most would define as terrorist activity), and thus requires a concerted effort to understand the motivating and facilitating factors behind this kind of behavior. As a result, thousands of scholarly books and reports by government agencies, think tanks, and research organizations are continually expanding the range and quality of research and analysis in this field. There are also many scholarly journals—such as *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, and *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*—that broaden our understanding of key counterterrorism challenges and effective responses.⁸

From a review of this literature, a number of themes and topics can be identified that are arguably central to the study of counterterrorism. To begin with, modern counterterrorism must be informed by the extensive and tragic history of terrorism over the past several centuries, and by research on the inner workings of terrorist groups, their leaders, strategies, tactics, operational challenges, and so forth. The historical record also reveals much—good and bad—about ways in which governments have attempted to respond to the threat of terrorism. We must examine the various intersecting components of a government’s counterterrorism strategies, particularly who has been asked to do what and why. And after compiling this broad base of knowledge, we must dig deeper to determine which kinds of counterterrorism policies and strategies have proven most effective for combating a specific kind of terrorist threat, within a specific context. This introductory chapter of the *Essentials* textbook will now

briefly review these central themes in the research on counterterrorism in order to set the stage for the menu of thematic and case study chapters throughout the rest of the volume.

Critical Lessons from History

To begin with, it must be recognized that terrorism is not a new phenomenon; there are historical examples from hundreds of years ago that can inform our understanding of modern terrorism. In order to formulate effective counterterrorism policies and strategies, we must study this history, specifically the trajectory of terrorist groups from their inception to their inevitable end. There are countless volumes of quality research on terrorism and terrorist groups that we can refer to, from scholarly books and journal articles to reports from think tanks and government agencies.⁹ Some examine forms of terrorism in the distant past, like the *Narodnya Volya* (People's Will), a terrorist group in late 1870s Russia. Other research provides detailed analysis of terrorist groups in the United States during the 1960s, from the Weather Underground to Puerto Rican separatist groups and right-wing extremists. During the 1970s and 1980s, we saw the rise and fall of left-wing terrorist groups throughout Europe, while according to once source of data, 1,355 terrorist incidents took place in the United States during the 1970s.¹⁰ News reports and scholarly research describe how, throughout the last half-century, these terrorist groups seized thousands of hostages worldwide in airplanes, embassies, parliaments, schools, and airports, while others used truck bombs to blow up embassies, financial centers, office and apartment buildings, hotels, and restaurants.

In more recent decades we have seen a rise in religiously oriented terrorist groups throughout the Middle East and Asia, many of whom view themselves as uninhibited by the kinds of strategic or tactical constraints of the previous, more politically oriented terrorists. We have learned that terrorists have plotted to sabotage commercial airliners, and that a terrorist group was able to acquire a deadly nerve agent and use it to kill and injure passengers on Tokyo's subway system. Terrorists have carried out an increasing array of suicide bombings, including attacks that killed hundreds and wounded thousands of commuters on trains in Paris, Moscow, Madrid, London, and Mumbai. And we learned that terrorists have been able to hijack and crash passenger airliners into buildings, killing thousands. Meanwhile, on a more positive note we have recently seen the end of several multidecade struggles against ethnonationalist terrorist groups in Northern Ireland, Spain, and Sri Lanka.

Studying the history of terrorism—particularly using case studies to examine a diverse array of groups including anarchists, ethnic separatists, and religious extremists—helps us recognize that the global terrorist threat is not new, but rather presents itself in new forms, partly due to the evolution of transportation and communications technologies. As Brian Jenkins notes, “Modern jet air travel gave terrorists a source of convenient targets—flying containers of hostages—as well as worldwide mobility. Developments in mass communications—radio, television, communications satellites—gave terrorists almost instantaneous access to a global audience. The proliferation of small arms and explosives provided a ready arsenal.”¹¹ And perhaps most importantly, the Internet has enabled many terrorist groups to establish and nurture a kind of global community, whose members share ideological grievances and motivations.

To sum up briefly, a solid historical understanding of terrorism should inform any analysis of the strategies and capabilities of modern terrorist groups, including their motivations, goals, and tactics, as well as specific dynamics such as recruitment, training, ideology, and communication. Further, to understand terrorism requires an ability to appreciate how terrorists view themselves and how they rationalize their behavior. We must study patterns of terrorist decision making¹² (at the individual and group levels), as well as the vulnerabilities and challenges that terrorists face.¹³ For example, terrorist leaders grapple with a range of organizational issues, such as maintaining operational security and motivation among the group’s members, maintaining situational awareness, and attracting a continual flow of finances and recruits.¹⁴ Members of a terrorist group often disagree about targeting and other aspects of terrorist attacks, including the level of violence overall.¹⁵ And we know that terrorist groups need some level of local support, requiring them to take seriously how community members perceive them and their actions.¹⁶ There is also much we can learn from studies of how complex, decentralized, and loosely networked organizations operate. Then we can identify the political, cultural, organizational, and financial seams within those networked organizations, and devise strategies to exploit these seams in order to degrade their operational capabilities.

Framed by our historical study of terrorism, we must also study how governments have responded to terrorist threats over time, and draw lessons—good and bad—from their experiences. Further, we must do this from an international and comparative perspective, one that can help us identify phenomena that, while framed by different political and social arrangements, lead to a better understanding of a complex world and our place within it. In the study of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency,

we are so often bound by the constraints of national thinking that a comparative perspective becomes especially valuable, because of the many common characteristics among the security challenges facing the global community of nations.

The historical record describes how, during the 1970s and 1980s, increased security and international cooperation among governments gradually reduced the number of terrorist hijackings. Better security and more effective government policies reduced the number of hostage seizures and kidnappings, except those for cash ransoms.¹⁷ Some governments have responded to terrorism by seeking political means of conciliation to resolve underlying issues, in an effort to undermine popular support for terrorist acts. Other governments have responded with widespread repression, not only of terrorists, but of innocent civilians as well. Responses to terrorism have also included military attacks and police raids on alleged terrorist hideouts, freezing the financial assets of individuals believed to be connected to the terrorists, arranging for training in counterterrorism practices, and rallying international support, to name but a few.¹⁸

The evolution of counterterrorism policies and strategies in the United States is particularly interesting. During the early 1870s, in what one historian described as “America’s first federal anti-terrorist intelligence program,” the Army and U.S. prosecutors dismantled the Ku Klux Klan, a major threat to domestic tranquility in the South.¹⁹ Following the First World War, an outbreak of anarchist violence led to a major crackdown on leftists of all varieties.²⁰ Throughout the 20th century, counterterrorism efforts in the United States were mainly the responsibility of law enforcement, because terrorist acts (of both foreign and domestic origin) against American targets were viewed as crimes to be investigated and prosecuted under U.S. law. Law enforcement agencies—and in particular, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)—mounted aggressive investigations of suspected terrorists, expanded the use of informants, and built a stronger intelligence base.²¹ During the 1970s and 1980s, a series of presidential determinations on counterterrorism gave the U.S. State Department the lead role overseas, while the FBI would focus its efforts domestically and the Federal Aviation Administration would be in charge when responding to airplane hijackings.²² These responsibilities remained largely unchanged for the next four decades.

A number of institutions, policies, and approaches created in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s remain part of today’s domestic counterterrorism repertoire, such as the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court, which issues warrants for domestic surveillance involving terrorism and other national

security threats.²³ The FBI also established a Hostage Rescue Team and a Terrorist Research and Analytical Center during this period. However, the FBI's counterterrorism program accounted for only a modest part of the bureau's spending when compared to other high-priority areas, such as organized crime. Further, successive leaders of the FBI insisted that only the criminal acts carried out by terrorists—e.g., bombings, assassinations, and bank robberies—would be investigated and prosecuted.²⁴

A recent report by William Rosenau about the U.S. counterterrorism experience during this period illustrates how a government may overstep the bounds of legal and moral legitimacy in their efforts to confront the threat of terrorism. For example, in April 1978, Mark Felt, L. Patrick Gray, III (the acting FBI director from 1972 to 1973), and Edward S. Miller (who had served as the head of the bureau's intelligence division), were indicted for ordering warrantless searches that were part of the FBI's investigation of the Weather Underground.²⁵ A series of revelations about police intelligence operations directed against American citizens contributed to a climate during the 1970s that was profoundly hostile to law enforcement activities that seemed politically oriented. The FBI lost popular and congressional support, new rules were put in place for domestic security investigations, and the bureau's budget remained essentially flat over the course of the decade.²⁶

Other institutional responses to the terrorist threat in the United States included a Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism (CCT), established in 1972 by the Nixon administration, which was abolished under the Carter administration later that decade when counterterrorism was brought under the purview of the National Security Council.²⁷ In 1982, the Reagan administration's National Security Directive 30²⁸ established an inter-agency coordinating committee to develop U.S. government policies on terrorism. The Department of State (DOS) was made the lead agency for countering international terrorism, and chaired the group known as the Interdepartmental Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (IWG/CT). The group consisted of officials at the assistant secretary level from several agencies, such as the departments of Defense, Justice, and State. In 1998, the Office of the National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection and Counterterrorism was established to oversee the broad variety of relevant policies and programs regarding counterterrorism, critical infrastructure protection, and preparedness and consequence management for attacks involving weapons of mass destruction.²⁹

But following the 9/11 attacks, the United States took a long, hard look at all of its counterterrorism policies and institutions, which led to enormous, lasting changes. The USA PATRIOT Act³⁰ passed by Congress in

October 2001 gave law enforcement new capabilities for surveillance and intelligence collection, and addressed border security, anti-money laundering, and many other aspects of counterterrorism. A new Department of Homeland Security was created, and law enforcement agencies throughout the country launched an increasing number of undercover “sting” operations intended to neutralize would-be terrorists.³¹ Meanwhile, according to their own analysis, the FBI has in the past decade (1) shifted its counterterrorism culture and organization from reactive to proactive and “threat-based”; (2) developed a nationally driven, fully integrated Intelligence and Investigative Program; (3) improved information sharing with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and international counterterrorism partners; (4) enhanced operational capabilities within FBI Headquarters and the field; and (5) evaluated lessons learned to better equip the nation in preventing terrorism.³²

Beyond the U.S. history of counterterrorism, we can learn a great deal from case studies on other countries—such as those developed by Philip Heymann and his colleagues for use at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government—which offer important learning opportunities when teaching courses on terrorism and counterterrorism.³³ Government reports, scholarly books, and journal articles reveal how the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Sri Lanka, Peru, Colombia, Indonesia, and many other countries around the world have responded to terrorism. Of course, one must examine not only successful examples of counterterrorism but also situations in which authorities made mistakes that could have—or did—prove counterproductive (and sometimes fatal) for those people whom they intended to protect. Overall, a comprehensive historical analysis is necessary for our understanding of contemporary terrorism and counterterrorism. As the saying goes, failure to understand our history dooms us to repeat our mistakes. This history reveals above all else the complex nature of terrorism, as well as the complexities of efforts to combat it.

The Complexities of Modern Counterterrorism

There are many important questions to explore in the study of modern counterterrorism. For example: What resources are committed to our nation’s counterterrorism efforts, and how are these resources distributed? What do we know about the current terrorist threat, what intelligence challenges do we face, and where are the most critical knowledge gaps? How can we assess our success (or failure) in confronting a specific terrorist threat? Within these general areas of inquiry, there are literally thousands of

researchers, strategists, and policymakers in the United States grappling with specific topics, seeking the most effective approaches to (for example) surveillance, detention, interrogation, border security, interdicting financial networks, and countering online violent extremism—all within a legal framework intended to protect civil rights. This complex array of policies and actions surrounding a government's response to terrorism requires the involvement of many different agencies and organizations. According to one authoritative source, a list of the primary members of the U.S. government counterterrorism “team” includes all of the following:³⁴

The White House, including:

- National Security Council

Department of State, including:

- Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism
- Bureau of Diplomatic Security
- Bureau of Intelligence and Research
- Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
- Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation

Department of Defense, including:

- Defense Intelligence Agency
- Regional geographic commands
- Special Operations Command

Department of the Treasury, including:

- Office of Foreign Assets Control
- Office of Terrorist and Financial Intelligence

Department of Justice, specifically:

- National Security Division
- Federal Bureau of Investigation

Department of Homeland Security, including:

- Office of Intelligence and Analysis
- Customs and Border Patrol
- Directorate for Preparedness
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Research and Technology—Centers of Excellence
- Coast Guard
- Domestic Nuclear Detection Office
- Transportation Security Administration
- Secret Service

Office of the Director for National Intelligence, including:

- Central Intelligence Agency
- National Counterterrorism Center

Department of Health and Human Services, including:

- Division of Medical Counterterrorism Strategy and Requirements
- Division of Biosafety and Biosecurity

Department of Energy, including:

- Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence
- National Nuclear Security Administration

It is important to note that virtually all of the organizations on this list have an extensive portfolio of missions and responsibilities, of which counterterrorism is only one. And each of them has their own organizational culture, statutory authorities, and resource constraints.

From this brief overview, we can see that there are many different kinds of things that must be done in support of a nation's counterterrorism effort, and a dizzying array of agencies and organizations responsible for doing those things. So, how can a student of counterterrorism make sense of all this, and understand who does what? One popular way to frame this analysis is to focus on the primary elements of a nation's power: the use of force by military and law enforcement, and the supporting roles of diplomatic, information, economic, financial, and intelligence activities (with special attention given to the latter). Clearly, as Korb and Boorstin argue, the integration of these elements is critical to the success of any counterterrorism effort,³⁵ which we'll discuss after first briefly reviewing each of these areas of activity.

Military

In most instances, brute force is a necessary but insufficient response to terrorism. As Brian Jenkins observed, "the United States fields the most powerful military force on the planet, but military power is a coercive tool, effective only in specific circumstances, counterproductive in others."³⁶ Turner Stansfield, a former chief of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), agrees, noting that punitive military attacks against terrorists are a remedy we should use only sporadically.³⁷ The use of force is naturally an important part of the solution to terror threats, particularly in terms of attacking valid enemy targets, when they become available. But terrorists and insurgents—by the very nature of the asymmetric warfare tactics they employ—tend not to offer easy targets for conventional military strikes. As Dan

Byman notes, terrorist groups have few assets worth bombing. “The ‘infrastructure’ of supporting terrorism is often not destroyable through bombing: training camps are rudimentary, and the weapons systems involved are small and easy to replace. Terrorists can easily disperse, making them difficult to strike—especially by air strikes or other ‘standoff’ means. Even worse, terrorists often melt back into the civilian population, increasing the likelihood of significant civilian casualties.” As a result, he concludes, “Because the terrorist attacks often inflict relatively few casualties, military force is often viewed as a disproportionate response.”³⁸

Certainly, conventional military units (infantry, armor, etc.) are often ill-suited to the task. As a result, nations throughout the world have developed special military units to fight terrorism, such as the Israeli Sarayat Matkal, British SAS, German GSG9, and U.S. Delta Force. Members of these special units develop an array of unique skills that make them more effective in tracking down and apprehending or eliminating terrorists. They learn foreign languages, cultural awareness, and an ability to adapt on their own (or in small teams) when faced with dynamic and often dangerous situations. In essence, the most effective kinds of military-related deterrents in counterterrorism are often invisible, rather than the more traditional military weapons of tanks, mortars, missiles, and so forth.

Furthermore, soldiers with automatic rifles standing guard at a possible terrorist target may not have much impact in deterring terrorist networks or lone wolves who have committed significant resources to carrying out their attack. Armed guards may make some terrorist operatives more nervous, unless they have been trained properly. But from the most simplistic point of view, stopping a terrorist plot requires knowing who to point those automatic weapons at. Essentially, it is far more an intelligence-driven problem than a military one.

Intelligence

The collection and analysis of high-quality intelligence is arguably the most important dimension of any counterterrorism effort. As noted earlier, a government must learn all it can about a terrorist group’s capabilities and intentions. In 1976, the Justice Department’s National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals declared that “effective, preventative measures against terrorists depend, to a large extent, on the efficiency of the intelligence operations of law enforcement authorities”—that is, “strategic intelligence.”³⁹ Thus, research on intelligence strategies and tactics (particularly case studies and lessons learned) should be a central component of counterterrorism training and academic degree programs.⁴⁰

In her chapter of this volume, Jennifer Holmes explains how counterterrorism intelligence involves collecting, analyzing, and sharing information with policymakers and other relevant agencies. And yet, absolute accuracy in all intelligence gathering and analysis efforts is a Herculean task, if not an altogether impossible expectation. Good intelligence can disrupt potentially catastrophic terrorist plots, like the one uncovered in August 2006 in which over 25 British Muslims were preparing to detonate liquid explosives on board transatlantic flights. But bad intelligence can make matters worse—indeed, as Richard Millett notes, “good intelligence can’t guarantee success, but bad intelligence can guarantee failure.”⁴¹

Meanwhile, there is a key challenge for intelligence and agencies to grapple with, one that may never be solved: counterterrorism intelligence successes are almost never made public, while intelligence failures are widely publicized. This, in turn, impacts public perception about the impacts and effectiveness of intelligence collection activities. Perhaps the most prominent critique of the U.S. intelligence community in recent years is found in the 9/11 Commission Report, which cited a “failure of imagination” and highlighted 10 crucial mistakes by the intelligence community that may (according to some views) have contributed to the inability of the CIA or FBI to prevent the attacks.⁴² In particular, the report calls attention to the lack of cooperation and information sharing among the many different agencies responsible for national security. Before 9/11, the CIA was plainly the lead agency confronting Al Qaeda. The FBI played a very secondary role, while the engagement of the departments of Defense and State was more episodic. Cooperation between agencies was limited; “responsibility and accountability were diffuse.”⁴³ But given the diverse array of intelligence community members⁴⁴—each with their own organizational culture, training, budget, and so forth—can it be any wonder that information sharing is not always as seamless as we’d like?

Cross-agency intelligence cooperation has been a challenge for many decades. As Rosenau explains, the FBI established Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) during the 1980s in order to overcome deep institutional rivalries between the bureau and state and local police agencies. The New York JTTF was the first, with jurisdiction over all terrorism cases, and served as the model for subsequent units in Chicago and elsewhere. Through the task force, the New York Police Department (NYPD) and FBI would investigate terrorism cases with the combined resources of the two agencies. The NYPD brought a deep knowledge of the city and “street smarts,” while the bureau supplied financial resources, equipment, and terrorism-related intelligence. “In essence, the bureau was attempting to professionalize analysis in an institution that had been dominated by

operations-focused special agents . . . helping investigators to situate individual crimes within broader patterns of terrorist behavior and to understand terrorist recruitment, motivation, financing, and operations.”⁴⁵ Today, according to the FBI there are over 100 JTTFs nationwide, with approximately 4,000 members hailing from over 500 state and local agencies and 55 federal agencies (the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. military, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Transportation Security Administration, to name a few).⁴⁶

Beyond the challenge of information sharing, the surveillance methods used by certain U.S. intelligence agencies have also been the focus of much public debate and criticism, especially after the release of classified documents by former contractor Edward Snowden and others. And in December 2014 the Senate Intelligence Committee released a scathing report about interrogation techniques employed by the CIA, which (the report argues) not only violated legal, moral, and ethical guidelines but also failed to provide any useful information that led to the apprehension of key terrorist operatives or the disruption of their plots.⁴⁷ These revelations and reports, in turn, have had a direct impact on another key aspect of counterterrorism intelligence: sharing strategically important information between countries.

According to Michael Sheehan, former Deputy Commissioner for Counterterrorism for the New York City Police Department, the most important counterterrorism activity since the fall of the Taliban has been the close cooperation of the CIA with foreign intelligence services:

Powerful American technologies identify names, locations, phone numbers and computer addresses of suspicious people. Local intelligence services operate informant networks. The CIA station chief works with intelligence officials to follow up and coordinate hundreds of leads generated by these joint collection efforts. The connections often cross national boundaries, and periodically they “connect the dots,” identify a key terrorist and have the local services execute a nighttime raid against a terrorist safe house. Such coordinated efforts have led to the captures of key al Qaida operatives including Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the 9/11 mastermind; Hambali, the planner of the Bali bombings; and Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, who oversaw the attack on the Navy destroyer USS *Cole*.⁴⁸

In recent decades, the United States has established a broad array of bilateral and multilateral relationships to facilitate intelligence gathering and sharing, as applauded by the 9/11 Commission Report.⁴⁹ Countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, and Pakistan have been especially important in providing intelligence to the United States in exchange for a variety

of incentives including economic or military aid.⁵⁰ The majority of intelligence provided has been in response to specific requests from the United States or in instances when the security services of these states discovered information about current threats to the United States. The CIA has also established more than 25 counterterrorist intelligence centers (CTICs) in foreign host countries to coordinate U.S. and allied intelligence operations. The CTICs are modeled on CIA facilities established in Latin America, and the first of these counterterrorism sites was created in the 1990s.⁵¹

Clearly, none of these critically important counterterrorism intelligence activities would be possible without diplomatic negotiations. The role of diplomacy, particularly when facing the threat of transnational terrorism, is often overlooked but is an integral part of any nation's counterterrorism efforts.

Diplomacy

To begin with, diplomatic efforts have been especially important for dealing with state sponsors and safe havens of terror groups. As Dan Byman explains in his chapter of this volume, a state may provide different kinds of support to terrorists, such as training and operations; money, arms, and logistics; diplomatic backing; organizational assistance; ideological direction; and (perhaps most importantly) sanctuary.⁵² Further, in some cases a state may not provide direct assistance, but may “deliberately turn a blind eye to the activities of terrorists in their countries.”⁵³ In response, a state victimized by the terrorists may (unilaterally or multilaterally) impose punitive economic and financial sanctions—or even threaten military action—against states who support terrorism.

But in a broader sense, as part of its counterterrorism effort, a state must convince other states (and sometimes a variety of international organizations and other nonstate entities) to help them counter the threat posed by globally networked terror groups. A state's diplomatic efforts in this regard might include alliances and treaties, United Nations Security Council resolutions, and other formal instruments. The U.S. State Department plays a very important role in negotiating bilateral extradition treaties, joint military operations, and as noted above, information sharing—all of which can be part of a broad counterterrorism effort.

Of particular concern in the diplomatic arena of counterterrorism is the problem of “failed or failing states,” which the U.S. Government Accountability Office defines as “nations where governments effectively do not control their territory.”⁵⁴ These are states that, according to Susan Rice and Stewart Patrick, “lack the capacity and/or will to perform core functions of

statehood effectively.”⁵⁵ These gaps in capacity or will mean that the state is unable to provide adequate economic, political, and social goods to all its citizens. The implications for counterterrorism are fairly clear, as Stewart Patrick notes: “Weak and failing states appeal to transnational terrorist organizations for the multiple benefits they offer: safe havens, conflict experience, settings for training and indoctrination, access to weapons and equipment, financial resources, staging grounds and transit zones, targets for operations, and pools of recruits.”⁵⁶ Thus, the past three U.S. National Security Strategy documents all point to several threats emanating from states that are variously described as weak, fragile, vulnerable, failing, precarious, failed, in crisis, or in collapse.⁵⁷

Most recently, intense diplomatic efforts have sought to resolve the crisis in Syria and Iraq, where the emergence of the Islamic State—a brutal Islamist extremist group that has captured and controlled a vast swath of territory—brings echoes of the tragic result of allowing Afghanistan to fall into the hands of the Taliban and Al Qaeda during the 1990s. Continual diplomatic negotiations are needed with Turkey, Jordan, Israel, and many other countries in the region. But this conflict has also brought to the forefront the importance of another important kind of diplomacy, sometimes referred to as strategic communication or public diplomacy.

Information and Public Diplomacy

Beyond the realm of state-to-state diplomacy, there are many ways in which words and communication can play a role in combating terrorism. Government leaders routinely communicate compelling ideas and visions to various audiences both at home and around the world in the hopes of impacting the views and behavior of people. Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr describe these efforts using the term “strategic influence,” and borrow from social and cognitive psychology studies to suggest how the environment in which such activities are conducted, along with the methods used, are essential to the success of any counterterrorism effort. At the same time, an ineffective strategic influence campaign can be counterproductive, and may lead a population to distrust (and even grow in animosity) toward the entity conducting the campaign.⁵⁸

Meanwhile, most terrorist groups also engage in their own form of strategic influence—through images, words, videos, etc.—in order to gain support and recruits. They seek to connect with individuals on an intellectual and emotional level, articulating an ideology that describes their shared grievances, a vision of the future, and a rationale for the use of violence. Political ideologies have played a prominent role in rationalizing

violence throughout the history of revolutionary movements and terrorism. According to Leonard Weinberg, both left- and right-wing ideologies have furnished small terrorist bands and their members with an exaggerated sense of their own importance, which led them to commit dramatic acts of violence in order to make their objectives known to wide audiences. Further, these ideologies have offered groups a perceived pathway to power, through which terrorism was meant to raise the level of awareness and trigger a violent uprising by a vast pool of supporters previously too victimized to act on their own.⁵⁹

Religious ideologies have also contributed to political violence, most recently illustrated by the rise of global jihadist movements around the world. Research by Marc Juergensmeyer found that religion gives terrorists a sense of moral legitimacy to employ violence in the name of “cosmic war.”⁶⁰ According to Steve Simon, religious ideology and devotion provides the lens through which a group’s members see their purpose in life, and thus traditional strategies of deterrence are unlikely to work, given the group’s willingness to die in the process of fighting.⁶¹ Brian Jenkins describes the ideological nature of Al Qaeda’s threat as a global call to jihad, in which the group’s leaders try to convince ordinary Muslims that Islam is in mortal danger from the West, and that armed struggle is needed to drive out the infidels from Muslim lands, topple “apostate regimes,” foster religious revival, expand the Islamic community, and ultimately reestablish the caliphate.

This is not, however, the only major type of religiously oriented violent ideologies. Research by James Aho describes how Christian extremists in the United States engage in violent activities, from cross-burning to bank robberies and targeted assassinations, while justifying this violence with selective interpretations of the Bible and a stated belief that they are “God’s battle axe and weapons of war.”⁶² In Israel, as Allan Brownfeld explained, adherents of the Jewish extremist ideology known as Zionism have been responsible for several prominent acts of violence—including the assassination of Israel’s Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995, by Yigal Amir, an ultra-Orthodox religious zealot. These extremists have adopted the notion that God demands not so much devotion to the Torah as to the land that Israel’s army has conquered, and this emphasis on land—particularly the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—has underscored an uncompromising view toward any attempt at negotiating peace agreements with the Palestinians.⁶³

In all of these cases, understanding the ideological goals and objectives of a terrorist group becomes a necessary component of an effective counterterrorism strategy. For example, we know that through its widespread

communications efforts—particularly using the Internet—Al Qaeda’s goal is to build a following and develop a global commitment to action, including violence.⁶⁴ Its message is relatively simple: “Think globally and act locally.” This message has motivated terrorist attacks in Madrid, London, Boston, and elsewhere over the past decade. Meanwhile, the Islamic State has been the source of an increasing amount of terrorist-related Internet activity, including videos and social media. They have a very active online propaganda effort, through which they have had some success recruiting foreign extremists to come from Europe, North America, and Southeast Asia to join their fight in Syria and Iraq.

The key lesson here is that a state must combat the ideology of any violent group or network. Ideas and visions have rarely (if ever) been defeated purely by kinetic force; in fact, the use of military force may actually strengthen the appeal and perceived validity of a group’s ideology. Instead, a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy must include a commitment to “winning hearts and minds,” or “winning the war of ideas.” But who in the United States is responsible for leading this effort? There are clearly identified agencies for each of the previous elements of counterterrorism activities: the Department of Defense (military), the Directorate of National Intelligence (intelligence), and the Department of State (diplomacy). Counternarratives and public diplomacy, increasingly using social media and the Internet, have an important role to play in shaping perceptions abroad of the United States and its policies.⁶⁵ But there is no single organization or agency responsible for this; it is a responsibility that is shared by the White House, by every government agency, by Congress, and even the private sector.

If we understand the underlying grievances linked to terrorism, we can—through our words and actions—make a potentially useful contribution to a counterterrorism effort. But this does not only pertain to how a country is perceived by the rest of the world. It is not only a matter of effective communications and image shaping. Strategic influence can also involve policies and actions in the economic realm.

Economics

Terrorist groups and supporters are drawn to an ideology of “political change through violent actions” in response to a wide range of grievances, including political, religious, social, and economic. In the latter category, a government’s legitimacy may be measured by its efforts (or lack thereof) to deal with unemployment, deteriorating infrastructure, corruption, and/or the provision of services to meet the needs of its population. A country can

address the economic dimensions of counterterrorism through policies and strategies that alleviate the suffering of its people. Failure to do so can add fuel to the resonance of a terrorist group's ideology.

There are many examples of this contextual dimension throughout the study of terrorism. In Afghanistan, the Taliban have capitalized on widespread poverty and corruption. In Northern Ireland, discrimination against Catholics (particularly in providing access to jobs and housing) was frequently cited among the motivations of recruits to the Irish Republican Army. In the Palestinian Territories, dire economic conditions—coupled with high levels of corruption among the Palestinian Liberation Organization, led by Yassir Arafat—led to the rise of the Islamist militant group Hamas, whose powerful influence is based in part on its provision of jobs and social services (like hospitals and schools) to members of the community. As Matt Levitt notes, “Palestinians suffer from extensive economic hardship. The West Bank and Gaza economies are in crisis,” with a majority of the population falling below the poverty line.

Clearly, the vast majority of Palestinians are in desperate need of assistance, ranging from unemployment compensation to food and medicine handouts to access to proper medical care. Both the Israeli government and Palestinian leadership have consistently failed to provide these essential services to the Palestinian community, thus leaving a void groups like Hamas are all too eager to fill.⁶⁶

Similarly, in southern Lebanon, the Shiite group Hizbollah provides welfare and employment services; constructs roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals; and even provides law and order in certain communities—all of which are activities which the central government should (but fails to) take care of. As a result, in some parts of the country Hizbollah derives considerable loyalty, influence, and power among the population. The group attracts funding for these services from the Lebanese diaspora worldwide, as well as its business enterprises and illicit trafficking networks. In recent years, according to James Love, “the organization has morphed from a resistance movement into a stateless government that leverages charity to meet the needs of the neglected, oppressed and marginalized Lebanese Shi’a population to maintain popular support.”⁶⁷

Research by Kim Cragin and Peter Chalk points to specific ways in which development policies can be used to counter terrorist activities and discourage local support for political extremism. Drawing on lessons from countries that have enacted social and economic development policies to inhibit a resurgence of terrorism within their jurisdictions, they offer five

policy suggestions: (1) social and economic development policies can weaken local support for terrorist activities; (2) real policy achievements in these areas can discourage terrorist recruits; (3) inadequately funded development policies are likely to inflate expectations and renew support for terrorism; (4) the ability of these policies to inhibit terrorism depends on their implementation; and (5) social and economic development policies can be used as a “stick” to discourage terrorism. The authors conclude by acknowledging that these policies do not eliminate terrorism, but can reduce its presence⁶⁸—reinforcing the point made earlier in this chapter that economic contexts are just one of many that must be addressed in a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy.

Based on this knowledge, the U.S. approach to counterterrorism has sometimes included economic development assistance to other countries, as a way to help those countries address socioeconomic grievances and facilitators of terrorism. Government organizations like the U.S. Agency for International Development can thus be seen as having an active role to play in counterterrorism, as does the U.S. Department of Commerce, by developing and implementing trade policies that contribute to economic growth. The bottom line to consider here is how nonkinetic instruments of a nation’s power can be utilized in combating terrorism. Beyond the diplomatic and economic realms, this also includes the ways in which governments and the global banking industry work together to interdict a terrorist network’s financial flows and degrade their operational capabilities.

Financial

Money is often called the “lifeblood” of a terrorist group. Of course, ample research indicates that terrorist attacks are often quite inexpensive, particularly when compared to the expensive weapons used by a modern military.⁶⁹ But it takes a fairly large amount of cash to run a terrorist group over a long period of time. Terrorist groups must spend money to recruit, train, travel, plan operations, bribe corrupt officials, and provide living expenses for operatives as they prepare for their attack. Thus, combating terrorism effectively requires knowledge about how and where groups acquire financial and other resources, and an ability to do something impactful with this knowledge.

Most often, a terrorist group’s need for financial resources has led them to engage in various kinds of criminal activities.⁷⁰ Loretta Napoleoni refers to these developments as a “new economy of terror” in which sources of revenue include remittances from diaspora members, charities, profits diverted from legal and illegal businesses, kidnapping, piracy, and many

other kinds of criminal activity.⁷¹ Meanwhile, scholars such as Tamara Makarenko, Thomas Sanderson, Chris Dishman, R. T. Naylor, Rachel Ehrenfeld, Louise Shelley, and John Picarelli have shed light on the constantly evolving relationships among members of terrorist and criminal networks, describing the phenomenon as a nexus, a confluence, a continuum, or some other kind of paradigm.⁷² Further, some groups—like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines—have slowly moved away from their original commitment to political violence and more toward increasing levels of purely criminal activity. In the case of FARC, these Marxist guerillas began taxing and protecting the drug trade, and are now seen by many as more of a peer competitor with Colombian drug cartels than as an ideologically motivated group seeking political change. For the Abu Sayyaf Group, there are indications that profit derived from criminal activity has supplanted sociopolitical ideology as the organization's *raison d'être*.

Responding to this dimension of a terrorist threat requires specific knowledge and skills that are not usually found among military, diplomatic, or even law enforcement professionals. In the United States, the mission of the Treasury Department—and particularly the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence—includes “safeguarding the financial system against illicit use and combating rogue nations, terrorist facilitators, weapons of mass destruction proliferators, money launderers, drug kingpins, and other national security threats.”⁷³ There are also multinational entities involved in this effort to combat terrorist financing, including INTERPOL (the international police organization, with 190 member countries),⁷⁴ and the Financial Action Task Force (an international policy-making and standard-setting body dedicated to combating money laundering).⁷⁵ And of course, the worldwide banking industry has a very important role to play in these efforts.

Beyond freezing bank accounts and arresting financial supporters of terrorist activity, combating terrorism also requires investigating and disrupting the illicit trafficking activities that generate significant revenues for terrorist groups. The most prominent of these activities involves the global drug trade. Research by Vanda Felbab-Brown—with extensive case studies on the Taliban, the Peruvian insurgent group Sendero Luminoso, and FARC—reveals how terrorist groups derive three sets of gains from their involvement with the illicit economy: increased *physical capabilities* (money and weapons); increased *freedom of action* (the ability to optimize tactics and strategies); and increased *political capital* (legitimacy, relationship with the local population, the willingness of the local population to withhold intelligence on the terrorist organization from the government,

and the willingness to provide intelligence about government units to the terrorist organization). In essence, as long as a global drug trade exists—in which there is high consumer demand and lucrative rewards for production and trafficking—terrorist groups will continue to profit from this trade.⁷⁶

Naturally, this means that beyond the Treasury Department, many other federal agencies in the United States also contribute to the financial dimensions of counterterrorism, including the Drug Enforcement Agency; Customs and Border Patrol; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. Finally, success in this area of counterterrorism requires a broad range of competent and effective federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, with community-specific strategies and powers to investigate, arrest, and prosecute individuals for criminal activities that are linked to terrorist networks.

Law Enforcement

In truth, the law enforcement agencies of a nation play a more important role than the military in identifying and confronting terrorist threats. As noted earlier, soldiers and tanks are essential for fighting a nation's wars but are ill-suited to the tasks of disrupting clandestine networks of terrorists and criminals. Instead, terrorism (and the criminal activities that support it) are best dealt with by local law enforcement who—through informal channels of intelligence gathering within a community—are best positioned to investigate and apprehend the leaders and operatives of these networks.

A report by the International Association of Chiefs of Police describes how, after the attacks of 9/11, law enforcement agencies in the United States were “asked to confront a new threat to their communities, perpetrated by individuals and organizations that had vastly different motivations and means of attack from traditional criminals. Accepting this challenge required law enforcement agencies to reassess their operations and reevaluate their priorities.”⁷⁷ However, according to Chief Deputy Jose Docobo of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in Tampa, Florida, it has become clear that “many of the objectives of terrorism prevention parallel current law enforcement policies with respect to local crime issues.” In his analysis of the intersection between terrorism, homeland security, and community policing initiatives, Docobo observes that

the investigative approach to a terrorist event is similar to that of a traditional crime incident. Creating external partnerships, citizen involvement,

problem solving, and transforming the organization to take on a new mission are all key elements of community policing which must also be part of a comprehensive homeland policing strategy. Community policing, which builds trust between the community and law enforcement and gives officers knowledge of the community and resident activity, is essential to providing actionable intelligence relating to potential terrorist actions.⁷⁸

As noted earlier, cooperation between law enforcement agencies is vital to successful counterterrorism. Rosenau describes the troubling situation when the United States was confronting terrorist groups during the 1970s: “Inter-agency rivalries and the lack of cooperation between the FBI and police in major jurisdictions such as New York hindered investigations. For example, a former special agent recalled that ‘there would be a competition between the FBI and NYPD [New York Police Department] to get to [a terrorist] crime scene first’ and establish authority over the investigation.”⁷⁹ As a result, the aforementioned Joint Terrorism Task Forces were established specifically to overcome deep institutional rivalries between the FBI and state and local police agencies, and enhance investigative cooperation.⁸⁰ Clearly, this kind of teamwork among law enforcement agencies is essential for responding effectively to the threat of terrorism.

Summary: Putting It All Together

These seven categories of efforts—military, intelligence, diplomatic, informational, economic, financial, and law enforcement—illustrate the complexities of counterterrorism. Further, responding successfully to the threat of terrorism requires extensive integration of all these efforts into a comprehensive strategy. As the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy explained, “we must make use of every tool in our arsenal—military power, better homeland defenses, law enforcement, intelligence, and vigorous efforts to cut off terrorist financing.”⁸¹ The 2006 U.S. *National Strategy for Countering Terrorism* echoes this argument:

the paradigm for combating terrorism now involves the application of all elements of our national power and influence. Not only do we employ military power, we use diplomatic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement activities to protect the Homeland and extend our defenses, disrupt terrorist operations, and deprive our enemies of what they need to operate and survive.⁸²

And the 2012 *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* published by the Obama administration also carries this theme forward by declaring its

intent to integrate “the capabilities and authorities of each department and agency, ensuring the right tools are applied at the right time to the right situation in a manner that is consistent with U.S. laws.”⁸³

The synthesis of these various dimensions of counterterrorism was also highlighted recently in a Brookings Doha Center report on the Islamic State (IS), the extremist group that has captured and held a large swath of territory across Syria and Iraq. This report recommended that the regional and international response to the threat of IS should include

a series of policies aimed at 1) countering IS's financial strength and ability to fund the provision of governance and social services to civilians; 2) neutralizing IS's capacity for military mobility and the rapid re-deployment of manpower; 3) collecting and acting on intelligence relating to IS's senior leadership and military command and control structure; 4) weakening and delegitimizing IS's effective use of social media for recruitment and information operations; and 5) seeking to stabilize the existing conflict dynamics in both Syria and Iraq.⁸⁴

Overall, integration of all the elements of national power is essential. However, it can be argued that none is more crucial to the success or failure of counterterrorism than intelligence. Accurate, high-quality intelligence is absolutely critical for determining where, when, and how to apply other instruments of national power. Effective action in military, diplomatic, law enforcement, financial interdiction, and all other areas of counterterrorism requires deep levels of knowledge, insight, and understanding—the intended products of any national intelligence service. Further, as explained in the beginning of this chapter, terrorism is a context-specific phenomenon. Thus, the success or failure of a counterterrorism strategy is often highly dependent on understanding and adapting to situational factors. For example, as research by Gregory Miller revealed, the attributes of a terrorist group impact the relative success of various counterterrorism policies.⁸⁵ There can be no one-size-fits-all approach to countering such a complex phenomenon as terrorism. A government must first determine *what kind of terrorist threat it is dealing with*—is it domestic or global in orientation? What do we know about the terrorists' motivating grievances, funding sources, support networks, leaders, operatives, and capabilities? What ideological category does it fall into (for example, left-wing, ethnonationalist, religious, right-wing, environmental extremism)? These are questions that must be answered before determining how and where a nation's resources should be committed.

A country's political climate will also affect the formulation, implementation, and assessment of counterterrorism strategies. The tendency to

politicize certain components of a counterterrorism strategy (for example, surveillance and intelligence collection) can make objective assessment of successes or failures all the more difficult. Thus, when integrating all the elements of national power toward a comprehensive counterterrorism effort, we must be sure to pause and reflect on how well we understand our own intentions, capabilities, and biases about our enemies. There is no place for prejudice, bloodthirst, or bigotry in effective counterterrorism.⁸⁶ Intelligence analysts, diplomats, policymakers, law enforcement, military personnel, and others involved in counterterrorism must be committed to objectivity, self-discipline, integrity, and attention to nuances and details of whatever terrorist threat their country is confronting.

Concluding Thoughts

A central goal of this textbook is to provide an intellectual toolbox that can be used for developing counterterrorism strategies and thoughtful practitioners to carry out those strategies effectively. As Brian Jenkins recently noted, “new counterterrorist doctrines are needed that orchestrate intelligence, law enforcement, military force, and psychological operations. . . . We need strategies that address radicalization and terrorist recruiting—the front end—and a better way of dealing with those who are detained—the back end.”⁸⁷ These strategies will require the involvement of a complex array of government agencies and personnel: border patrols, airport security, maritime port cargo screening machines, immigration services, law enforcement and corrections officers, finance and treasury departments, military and intelligence services, and even public health agencies participate in some aspect of counterterrorism.

However, countering terrorism is not exclusively a government responsibility—we all have a role to play. Family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors are most often in the best position to detect signs of an individual’s radicalization, or indications that an individual may be providing financial, material, or other forms of support to a terrorist network. Research on so-called lone wolf terrorists has shown that in a majority of plots or attacks the perpetrators had produced letters or public statements outlining their beliefs, and other people were often aware of their grievances, extremist ideologies, and/or intent to engage in terrorist activity.⁸⁸ Other studies have shown that a person’s illicit financial activities are impossible to permanently conceal from friends and family members. Countering terrorism should thus be viewed not as something that government agencies can or should be expected to do on their own, but rather, as a responsibility that is shared among the members of an entire society.

The role of friends and family members is most poignantly reflected in the emerging research on how individuals disengage from terrorism. The past decade has seen a rapid expansion of so-called de-radicalization programs, in which experts (often psychologists or religious authorities) work with individuals who have been convicted of terrorist offenses to alter their belief in the justifications for violent actions. But there is a much broader area of research, pioneered by John Horgan and others, in which we are learning a great deal about how and why individuals have left a terrorist movement on their own accord.⁸⁹ Many of them have become disillusioned by the difficult and harsh lifestyle, or by incompetent (or excessively brutal) leaders and comrades. Others became impatient with the lack of change that their violent actions were supposed to bring about. Furthermore, as we gain more insight about the various roles an individual might adopt within a terrorist movement (e.g., supporter, financier, logistician, bomber, etc.) we begin to find a much broader spectrum of reasons why people may get involved in—or abandon—terrorist activity. Overall, a nation's counterterrorism strategies should incorporate research-based initiatives that will encourage individuals to disengage from terrorist activity.

The good news—based on the historical record and scholarly research—is that terrorism ends, someday and in some way or another. In some cases, a terrorist group's leadership cadre are captured or killed, while in others the ideology of the terrorists fails to resonate among successive generations, limiting their ability to attract support and recruits among a population. Some terrorist groups have given up the armed struggle and embraced a political process, as seen in Northern Ireland and Spain. And other groups have become more interested in profitable kinds of criminal activities, which eventually erode the community support upon which they were originally dependent.⁹⁰ Historically, terrorists have tended to think more about tactics than strategy, more about the necessity of violence than about what it will accomplish. Terrorist operations may advertise a group's ideology and attract recruits,⁹¹ but there is scarcely (if any) evidence that terrorism will lead to the achievement of ideological goals or personal salvation.

As of this writing, the most excessively brutal terrorist group making headlines is the Islamic State, whose operatives in Iraq and Syria have slaughtered thousands of fellow Muslims, both Sunni and Shiite, whom they condemn for refusing to share their vision of a new caliphate ruled by sharia law. Others around the world have been inspired by this vision, from would-be terrorists in the United States to the group of men in Paris who murdered cartoonists they felt had offended the Prophet Muhammad. But it must be noted that of the estimated 1.4 billion Muslims worldwide,

only a tiny fraction have expressed any sympathy or support for either the Islamic State or the broader global jihadist network that Al Qaeda has built over the past three decades. Beyond carnage and destruction, these extremists have not achieved anything significant, and they are unlikely to do so in the future.

This is not to suggest complacency, however. Unlike a traditional organization—which can be defeated by capturing or killing its leaders—this jihadist network remains difficult to destroy.⁹² However, without competent strategic direction and planning, and without a reliable stream of resources or recruits, the network relies mainly on influencing people's beliefs, and then encouraging them to act on behalf of those beliefs. A few have been convinced to do so, but the overwhelming majority of the world rejects the assertion that the world can be made better through violent acts. As a result, terrorism is not, and has never been, a winning strategy.

The truth is, the future doesn't look that good for the terrorists, generally speaking. In fact, as Jenkins observes, "terrorism remains a strategic failure in that no terrorist group has ever achieved its stated goals."⁹³ They have not brought down any national economies or political regimes. Even those who have been around the longest (the IRA/PIRA, ETA, FARC, etc.) have largely failed to acquire the power to make significant or lasting changes. This should give us some sense of optimism. Indeed, it is probably necessary to be at least somewhat of an optimist when studying grim topics like terrorism and other forms of criminality and political violence. However, we must also acknowledge that in the future, at least some terrorists will become more sophisticated in their tactics, support operations, and communication. We must be prepared to respond with increasingly sophisticated counterterrorism strategies. Contributing to that effort is the overall goal of *Essentials of Counterterrorism*.

Acknowledgments

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Part I: Policy and Strategy

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Developing and Implementing Counterterrorism Policy in a Liberal Democracy

Jennifer S. Holmes

“Order without liberty and liberty without order are equally destructive.”
—Theodore Roosevelt¹

General Principles and Strategy

IN COUNTERTERRORISM, THE GENERAL GUIDE TO SUCCESS is to catch or kill as many terrorists as you can—without creating more. Although it sounds simple, in a democracy this requires both the guarantee of security and the maintenance of broad public support. When crafting a response to terrorism, different policy aims may be prioritized at one time or another. However, long-term goals should not be undermined for short-term gain. Given political pressures to act and act expeditiously, it is necessary to take sufficient time to craft a comprehensive strategy that achieves efficacy and accountability and that balances security and political integration. Most importantly, fundamentally—do no harm. Sometimes, there are no good options. Actions need to be strategically chosen with proximate and ultimate goals in mind. Otherwise, according to Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison-Taw, “individual application of selected tactics and policies without a comprehensive national plan can prolong a conflict or even lead to complete failure.”²

Before crafting an appropriate counterterror policy, it is important to properly identify the threat. Is it an ethnically or religiously driven group? Does it have primarily domestic or international support? How does the group recruit? What is their capacity for harm? Martha Crenshaw, one of the nation's foremost experts on terrorism, urges us to develop an understanding of terrorism within context, in order to identify the "causal relationship between terrorism and its political, social and economic environment" and the "impact of terrorism on this setting."³ Specifically, what is the motivating factor behind the group? In the case of religiously motivated terrorism, Magnus Ranstorp argues that it is necessary to understand "the decision to use religious violence" as "dependent on, and shaped by, the heightened degree of the sense of crisis threatening their faiths and communities. This, in turn, is influenced by the historical legacy of political repression, economic inequality or social upheaval, and may be exacerbated by the ethnic and military disputes."⁴ But groups that are truly motivated by religious ideology may not alter their behavior if they view their violence as being justified by divine rules that cannot be changed. For example, David Rapoport attributes the decimation of the Thugs (in addition to the effectiveness of the British) to their unwillingness to change their *modus operandi* in the face of inevitable defeat.⁵ This is a very different type of violence compared to a solipsistic terrorism, which is violence committed with the aim of building the self-esteem of the group, as opposed to creating panic or fear in the target population.⁶ That type of violence is radically different from terrorism that is a mode of attack strategically chosen to minimize the effectiveness of an opponent's defenses.⁷ It is important to understand the motivating and relevant recruitment factors in order to minimize support for terrorist groups, which is a top priority in counterterror strategy.

Additionally, it is important to understand the strategic importance of labeling groups terrorists or something different, such as guerrillas or revolutionaries. Crenshaw observes that governments don't negotiate with terrorists, but they do with revolutionaries. The groups may engage in similar acts of violence, but the response differs: "Calling actions terrorism may dictate a military, not political response and justify exceptional measures."⁸ This statement contrasts with British terrorism expert Paul Wilkinson's first principle: "No surrender to the terrorists, and an absolute determination to defeat terrorism within the framework of the rule of law and the democratic process."⁹ It must be remembered that *terrorism* is a political term. Although some scholars believe it is a simple term to define,¹⁰ others recognize a conceptual haziness, making it difficult to differentiate among different types of violence.¹¹ Nonetheless, the label frames the debate and influences policy choices.

Democracy as a Liability or Source of Relative Immunity?

Although some analysts have asserted that democracy is more vulnerable to terrorism than authoritarian regimes, history provides examples of both authoritarian and democratic regimes plagued by terrorism. Some scholars describe a deterrent value of democracy to domestic political violence¹² and to international terrorism.¹³ Democracies may have unique strengths in maintaining public support, and this strength is relative to how unified the population remains. For example, according to Sir Robert Mark,

the social conditions on the British mainland heavily favor the security forces in countering terrorism, because they are democratically accountable and enjoy almost universal support in discharging that particular task, a support which would be, of course, less certain if the task was more controversial. That is the essential condition for countering terrorism, without which the most efficiently organized, trained and led security forces could not succeed.¹⁴

It must be remembered that it is difficult for terrorists to operate without safe houses and sources of local support.

Some studies have argued that democracies facilitate terrorist activities due to their concern for protecting political and civil liberties.¹⁵ Others have stressed the destabilizing influence of uncontrolled violence, regardless of regime type.¹⁶ How much of a threat is terrorism to democracy? According to Ted Robert Gurr, “on the basis of the record to date, the revolutionary potential of political terrorism is vastly overrated. Where it has had any impact at all, other powerful political forces were pushing in the same direction.”¹⁷ Others have found indirect effects of terrorism to be destabilizing, through the coups they provoke in order to counter the terrorism. Despite the lack of academic consensus about the relative immunity or vulnerability of democracies to terrorism,¹⁸ successful counterterror policies in democracies provide security and maintain popular support, without sacrificing the democracy that is to be defended.

Security

Rising, unchecked violence can quickly become a concern that trumps other priorities. The hope for “the right to life, liberty and security of person” is fundamental and remains so regardless of the source of the threat. Spanish terrorism expert Fernando Reinares argues that “systematic and sustained terrorist activity not only recurrently violates human rights, it also impedes the free exercise of civil liberties, alters the normal functioning of

official institutions, hinders the management of public affairs by elected authorities or disrupts the autonomous development of civil society.”¹⁹ Terrorism creates fear, a desire for safety, and a hunger for vengeance. If the government does not successfully respond to violence, fear and a lack of safety can overwhelm the public and undermine government support. At this point, citizens may even surrender their democracy in return for hopes of increased security, which may or may not occur. According to former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, “in this regard, there is apparently a moment of truth in the life of many modern democracies when it is clear that the unlimited defense of civil liberties has gone too far and impedes the protection of life and liberty.”²⁰

Risk of Underreaction and the Possible Emergence of Militias, Death Squads, and Vigilante Justice

Democracies face risks from underreaction to terrorism. First, they can lose credibility in terms of the public’s evaluation of the government’s provision of the basic need for security. Paul Wilkinson notes that “if the government, judiciary and police prove incapable of upholding the law and protecting life and property, its whole credibility and authority will be undermined.”²¹ Underreaction can also invite more attacks. “Under-reaction . . . most likely would be interpreted as weakness, perhaps as evidence of successful intimidation. . . .”²² Even worse, if terrorism is not sufficiently controlled by the government, popular support for a dictatorship may emerge or vigilante or death squads may form. According to security researcher Richard Clutterbuck, “if a government fails to protect its citizens, those citizens may take the law into their own hands by forming, first, vigilante groups and then, as law and order breaks down, their own private armies.”²³ Mistakes will lead to either state terror or clandestine terror. Popular support and justification for vigilante justice can occur when there is widespread belief that the government cannot protect the populace. However, the emergence of paramilitary groups also poses a threat if they begin to usurp control and support from the government.²⁴ Widespread exposure to violence results in support for paramilitary movements, such as in Northern Ireland²⁵ and Colombia, creating an increased cycle of violence.

Popular Support and Political Integration

Maintaining popular support and a unified political community is essential to successfully combat terrorism. Political scientist Max Manwaring

believes that the outcome of any counterinsurgency effort will be determined by the legitimacy of the state, the unity of effort, the type of support for the targeted state, the ability to reduce outside aid to the insurgents, intelligence, and finally, discipline and capabilities of the armed forces. He believes the single most important factor is legitimacy,²⁶ a point also emphasized by Gurr's influential research on rebellions.²⁷ Crenshaw stresses that the crucial issue for democratic states to understand both the consequences and causes of terrorism "is the relation between terrorism and political legitimacy."²⁸ To do so, both a long- and short-term perspective is necessary. There are two main ways in which the maintenance of popular support and an inclusive political community lead to security: through facilitating success in the "hearts and minds" battle and by avoiding long-term damage to the political community through an overreaction to terrorism.

Necessity of Popular Support for Hearts and Minds

The classic hearts and minds approach to internal counterinsurgency is dependent on popular support for long-term success. After separating the civilians from the insurgents, according to O'Sullivan and Miller, it is necessary to win popular support through "protection and the prospect of economic and social progress."²⁹ However, the military task of rounding up the insurgents or terrorists is extremely difficult to do without accurate local intelligence. This information is much more likely to be obtained if the government enjoys popular support. However, without sufficient security, it will not be possible to gain support. This highlights the dual priorities of maintaining support and providing security, as opposed to conceptualizing them as two items in balance. In the words of security experts Ian Beckett and John Pimlott, "the outcome, as far as the security forces are concerned, depends on the security of the civilian population and their separation from the insurgent, this being an absolute requisite for the essential task of 'winning hearts and minds.'"³⁰

Repression and the Risk of Overreactions

Just as there is a severe risk to democracies of underreaction, there are also serious risks of overreaction. Overreaction to terrorism can be even worse. A widely recognized truism is that terrorists try to goad their target into overreacting.³¹ From the terrorist's perspective, popular support and the democratic process are prime targets to destabilize and to undermine support. "Most terrorist groups realize that public support for democratic

values and institutions is a major obstacle to their schemes. Hence the democratic process is a key target.”³² In terms of terrorist propaganda, overreaction helps their case politically and facilitates operations and recruitment. Clutterbuck counsels that “over-reaction would not only poison our way of life, it would also play into the terrorists hands, by building more public sympathy for them, and by increasing what is now only a tiny trickle of recruits to their ranks.”³³ Similarly, Adrian Guelke warns that repression provides “evidence of the effectiveness of their campaign and therefore a reason to persist.”³⁴ Terrorists typically hope for indiscriminate crackdowns and repressive, heavy-handed responses. Their hope is to “alienate the public from the government.”³⁵ In general, according to Gray, it “is all but impossible for terrorist organizations themselves to inflict truly major physical damage upon the capabilities of states . . . it is close to impossible for the forces of counterterrorism to root out all of the would-be warriors of terror. Each side usually has to be encouraged to defeat itself politically.”³⁶ A recent analysis of the Uruguayan and Peruvian experiences concluded that “an indiscriminate, repressive state response undermines citizen support and harms the democracy that the state is supposedly acting to protect.”³⁷ The result can be a loss of democracy.

In the case of domestic groups that fear the government, but have not yet turned to violence, increased scrutiny can be counterproductive by causing a security dilemma. Active investigation and infiltration reinforces the belief of many in these organizations that the government is out to get them. For example, in the United States, the organized militia groups that fear federal government power are mostly reactive, instead of proactive. As the Federal Bureau of Investigation explains:

These militias may indeed believe that some type of NWO [New World Order] scenario may be imminent . . . but they are more inclined to sit back and wait for it to happen. They will stockpile their guns and ammunition and food, and wait for the government to curtail their liberties and take away their guns. When the expected NWO tragedy does not take place, these reactive militias will simply continue their current activities, most of which are relatively harmless.³⁸

This is an especially salient point, since only the most extreme category of militia group maintains an “openly offensive posture.” The others are of a defensive nature, and their plans for “violent action are contingent upon perceived government provocation.”³⁹ Too much investigation may confirm their beliefs about excessive authority, increase their recruitment, and radicalize their activity. Another problem with increased scrutiny is that it

would take excessive amounts of surveillance to separate the truly violent from the truly passionate. In the words of Harvard professor Philip Heymann, looking for terrorists in extremist groups is like “looking for a needle in a haystack of ‘mere talk.’”⁴⁰ Allocating sparse intelligence resources to nonviolent domestic groups can distract agencies from other more pressing security needs. More recently, some have suggested that U.S. dragnet intelligence gathering has resulted in a sluggish system that can’t react to otherwise actionable intelligence, as seen in the 2013 Boston bombing, where the FBI had been alerted to the Tsarnaev brothers, but failed to act on the tip.

Furthermore, overreaction by a government can cause a diplomatic backlash, especially among nations that have commitments to human rights, as in (for example) the European Convention. Significant deviations from general human rights standards may negatively affect international cooperation, in addition to causing domestic dissent.⁴¹ The loss of international cooperation can be harmful, especially when it comes to the sharing of intelligence, which is essential in countering international terrorism or domestic terrorist groups that have significant external support.

Maintain Tolerance

In order to avoid overreaction, commitment to an inclusive political community must be maintained. Clutterbuck notes that a “civilization which can accommodate dissent has a better prospect of prolonged survival.”⁴² Creeping authoritarianism is a danger, as people start equating dissent with subversion. This problem is particularly important in terms of domestic intelligence. Heymann warns that “unless there are substantial efforts to be clear, the lines separating mere opposition or permissible dissent in politics from a real internal danger are likely to be crossed by whoever controls intelligence capabilities. It is therefore critical to define a very clear line to quiet public insecurity and the fears held by political opponents.”⁴³ These lines have been crossed in both established, advanced democracies and in developing countries. For example, in the United States, during the 1950s through the 1970s, the FBI counterintelligence group COINTELPRO actively investigated and infiltrated numerous domestic groups that it considered seditious, such as the Socialist Workers Party, the Black Panthers, antiwar activists, civil rights groups, and women’s liberation groups.⁴⁴ The FBI later admitted that it placed wiretaps on federal offices, members of Congress and their aides, and journalists during the 1970s.⁴⁵ These examples typify a case in which passionate political opposition to

government policy can create deep suspicion of the patriotism of the opposition, triggering an exhaustive investigation of that group and its members. In Peru, the head of the Peruvian intelligence service, Vladimiro Montesinos, manipulated the media, infiltrated the judiciary, and bribed members of Congress. Eventually, the intelligence scandals and electoral fraud ended the regime and rule of President Fujimori, although there were efforts to reform the intelligence services.⁴⁶ The pattern may be unfolding again. The revelations unleashed by Edward Snowden with the help of *The Guardian's* Glenn Greenwald and filmmaker Laura Poitras will continue to raise fundamental questions about the breadth of U.S. domestic surveillance and the lack of transparency and oversight. Future revelations are likely to highlight further abuses.

The Democratic Process and Human Rights

A perceived tradeoff between security and the protection of civil liberties, the Constitution, or human rights may have fundamentally destabilizing long-term effects. According to Cynthia McClintock, terrorist violence affects legitimacy because

government officials perceive a contradiction between respect for human rights and the defeat of the subversives. Civilian and military officials argue over the correct policy response. The democratic state loses its legitimacy both by reacting aggressively, without concern for the constitution, and by reacting more cautiously, and thereby possibly appearing ineffectual.⁴⁷

In terms of restrictions on civil liberties, this may create future grievances and may affect other rights, through a cumulative, debilitating effect. Instead, security researcher Laura Donohue proposes thinking “in terms of a constellation of short- and long-term tradeoffs that consider the risks imposed on the state by the suspension—and maintenance—of complex and interconnected rights.”⁴⁸

Another important decision is whether to conceptualize the main counterterrorism campaign as either military or law enforcement. Again, the decision of how to craft an appropriate response to terrorism depends on the type of terrorism that threatens the regime and its capacity to inflict harm. Renowned terrorism expert Brian Jenkins identifies the dilemma between treating terrorism as war or as a criminal matter. He acknowledges the difficulties in treating it as a criminal matter, especially when the group operates abroad. In treating terrorism as a war, the evidence “need not be of courtroom quality; intelligence reporting will suffice.” However, he also

notes the drawbacks of this approach, including the deaths of innocents, the creation of martyrs, and the provocation of retaliation.⁴⁹ The calculus may be different for a strictly domestic conflict.

Heymann highlights the tension between an aggressive, preemptive investigative response to terrorism and a response that restricts government activity to safeguard individual liberties. In particular, he is concerned about changing the rules in relation to the use of deadly force, which differ greatly between military and police forces. He concludes that “it would be a foolish gamble with deeply respected civil liberties to make changes in the protective practices of decades or centuries . . . [and] cases of terrorism should be investigated and tried with the same procedures that we use for trying cases of organized crime and other more familiar criminal matters.”⁵⁰ However, he believes that it makes sense to investigate peaceful groups that substantively agree with groups that practice terrorism. There are risks of a nonjudicial process in combating terrorism domestically, as exemplified by the case of Northern Ireland. Even though in the short term more terrorists may be jailed, the process typically involves the loss of due process. In order to avoid creating more division and suspicion among a divided populace, according to David Bonner, exceptions to due process “ought to be subject to binding review by a judicial body, rather than merely refer to an advisor or advisors.”⁵¹

These considerations need to be balanced given the type of terrorism and how much capacity for harm they have. Particular deviations from due process need to be carefully evaluated in terms of effective intelligence yield and the cost of civil liberties, to avoid “pain for no gain.”⁵² Some scholars question the overall effectiveness of a “get tough” approach to terrorism. For example, Christopher Hewitt concludes that “no relation is discernible between the imposition of such powers and the subsequent level of terrorist activity; nor does terrorism decline as the emergency legislation is made more severe.” In addition, he finds that the two “most common counter-insurgency tactics, patrolling and indiscriminate mass searches, produce only meager results.”⁵³ Heymann and Nanyem stress the necessity of a long-term strategy that contains accountability and the importance of an informed citizenry. They do not deny the need for extraordinary measures, but stress the “need to ensure that systems of oversight are robust” and the necessity of assessing “with some transparency, the effectiveness of new measures to combat terrorism.”⁵⁴ In general, one recent study has addressed the consequences of repression. Will Moore finds that dissidents will substitute violent protest for nonviolent protest and vice versa when faced with government repression. He found no evidence that contextual factors of authoritarian or democratic regimes affect this

relationship or that there is a difference in effectiveness of repression in the short or long term.⁵⁵

Increasing State Capacity

The state needs to be strong enough to have a functioning judicial system, discourage the emergence of violence, mount a vigorous defense, and maintain citizen support. Especially when countering domestic terrorism, state competence matters. “No matter how hard insurgents try, they will be frustrated if the government has a competent and capable administration that dispenses services, controls the population, and effectively coordinates a multitude of political, economic and security policies.”⁵⁶ Many scholars argue that terrorists cannot defeat democracies—only democracies can defeat themselves. Strength, democratic accountability, impartiality, and strong public support would facilitate the work of counterterrorism forces. In a domestic conflict, even peace settlements with newly demobilized groups will fail without a strong state, “specifically in the areas of preserving public order, administering justice, and executive control over the military.”⁵⁷ The intelligence agencies also need to be strong and accountable.

General studies have pointed to the importance of judicial control to counter domestic terrorism, despite the fact that the terrorists do not act within constraints of humanitarian or other guidelines. However, democracies such as West Germany and Italy generally succeeded in their internal domestic terrorist conflicts with such judicial control and oversight of both the police and the intelligence services.⁵⁸ Errors and mistakes are costly, particularly if procedures are not followed or shortcuts are taken that result in providing terrorists with propaganda gains. “To foster corruption is always a prime terrorist aim,” allowing the government to lose credibility and support.⁵⁹

In order to discourage violence, the state needs defensive measures such as special counterterrorism forces, increased policing, and public awareness campaigns.⁶⁰ In order to provide security, state capacity needs to be increased. Gabriel Marcella notes that “counterinsurgency is expensive business; it cannot be done on the cheap and requires the full mobilization of a nation’s resources over a relatively long period of time.”⁶¹ This general principle applies to both domestic terrorism and international terrorism. Military and police strength need to be increased and professionalism maintained (or increased).

The process of intelligence involves collecting, analyzing, and sharing information with policymakers and other relevant agencies. As Richard Millett notes, “good intelligence can’t guarantee success, but bad

intelligence can guarantee failure.”⁶² Ideally, the aim of intelligence reform is to create accurate and timely intelligence, foster close cooperation among intelligence, military, and law enforcement agencies, maintain informational security, and remain accountable to civilian authorities. This aim can be undermined by interagency distrust and politicization of the intelligence community (among other factors). In order to avoid the politicization of the intelligence community, it is better not to mix intelligence or counterintelligence with domestic law enforcement. Democracies such as Canada, Britain, France, and Germany have had success with separate domestic intelligence agencies, which are subject to oversight but remain able to act covertly.⁶³ Similarly, separation should be maintained between the military and the police forces. In his review of security and democracy in Latin America, J. Samuel Fitch warns “at a minimum, democratic governments must clearly delineate the lines between police and military roles in internal security. Insofar as possible, the armed forces should be removed from primary responsibility for internal security, without denying the need for trained counterinsurgency forces to intervene when antidemocratic forces attempt to establish a territorial base.”⁶⁴

Reducing Grievances

Domestic support for terrorism must be diffused. Being responsive to legitimate grievances may increase the government’s popular support and decrease overt and tacit support for terrorists. However, governments must be careful not to create new complaints by tending to old grievances. Good intelligence, effective coordination, and a competent police and judiciary cannot alone squash internal terrorism with a significant domestic source of support. In this case, the political realm of the conflict is extremely important. Wilkinson recognizes that “democratic authorities need to defeat the terrorist leadership at the political level by showing that the government is capable of responding imaginatively to the legitimate demands and aspirations of the very social groups the terrorists seek to mobilize.”⁶⁵ Moreover, being responsive to understandable grievances may increase the government’s popular support and decrease overt and tacit support for terrorists. However, concessions are not a panacea. In the scenarios of a polarized society with domestic terrorism, as Bonner points out, even reasonable “concessions to one side tend to alienate or antagonize the other, and such problems have bedeviled the political negotiations of the peace process”⁶⁶—for example, this is what has occurred in Northern Ireland. Wilkinson recognizes another limitation to this option when a group lacks a base of mass support but instead looks for validation from

a “religious or ideological agenda which so totally rejects the existing political and social order that there is no basis for negotiation with democratic government on political, social and economic demands.”⁶⁷

Conclusion

To successfully counter terrorism, a primary (but clearly not the only) goal is to catch or kill as many of the enemy as you can—without creating more. To do so, a comprehensive campaign that increases security, builds broad public support, and maintains international support will be more successful. Creating an effective intelligence community, increasing security, and maintaining principles of good governance are essential to democracies confronting terrorism. According to Wilkinson, “the trick is to harmonize strategy on both the security and political fronts: this is the only basis for a winning strategy.”⁶⁸ The greatest threat to progress is impatience, which increases the temptation to emphasize one aspect of a strategy in the short term. Lopsided efforts will not bring long-term success, and may undermine the chances of long-term achievement of a comprehensive peace. Advancement in one area does not eclipse the need to achieve progress in the others. Democracy poses both challenges and strengths in combating terrorism. To be successful, both security (including avoiding overreaction and underreaction) and political integration (including political support, tolerance to the loyal opposition, and maintenance of human rights) must be prioritized. To do so, the state must be strengthened, including improving transparency and accountability.

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Geographic Perspectives on the Sociocultural, Economic, and Demographic Aspects of Counterterrorism

Christopher Jasparro

SOCIOCULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS (henceforth referred to as sociodemographic) are among the most commonly cited suspects in debates over the “root causes” of Islamist terrorism (i.e., those factors that give extremist ideologies resonance and appeal and spawn organizations willing to conduct violence on their behalf). The question of what the root causes of terrorism actually are, however, remains a subject of great debate.¹ It is also difficult to build strategies for addressing broad and complex sociodemographic trends. For example, youth bulges (in which young adults compose 40 percent or more of the adult population) in Muslim countries are a commonly cited demographic driver of extremism. Yet, how can links between youth bulges across large swaths of the planet and a global terrorist movement be realistically addressed? Lack of precision and specificity is one reason why such analysis and consequent policymaking has been problematic.

This is partly because social science approaches used in terrorism research and analysis generally do not focus on the sociospatial factors (the geographic or place-specific contexts of seemingly widespread and

generalized sociodemographic variables). For example, in an analysis of a 2002 Pew survey that questioned over 7,000 Muslim respondents in 14 countries about support for terrorism, Fair and Sheppard discovered that while some general variables applied across the sample, the actual effects of particular variables differed throughout the countries surveyed.² The authors thus concluded that interventions to mitigate support for terrorism should be directed toward highly defined, country-specific audiences employing creative analytical application of demographic and even psychographic data³—an approach to which this chapter suggests adding geographic as well.

Analyses that move beyond broad generalizations and consider the role played by particular and differing spatial factors on terrorist movements and how groups exploit physical and social spaces could potentially yield significant insights.⁴ As Liotta and Miksell argue:

Environment and geography provide both context and opportunity for the making of a terrorist. The context springs from the objective conditions that shape the strategies and tactics that are employed in terrorist operations. The opportunity consists of objective conditions that permit the organization recruitment and training of terrorists and the continuous functioning of networks of logistics and intelligence support.⁵

According to Smith, “geography, as the study of the globe and its interaction with the people on it, provides us with the means to understand the battlefield and predict its nature so as to use the elements to advantage.”⁶

The application of geographic perspectives allows for visualizing, organizing, and assessing real world data (that can otherwise inundate essential information with a deluge of detail), thereby elucidating important spatial patterns and structures.⁷ In other words, by knowing what areas produce the most terrorists and their supporters, as well as *where* various sociodemographic factors play particularly significant roles in facilitating terrorism (and how terrorist organizations exploit these factors from place to place), counterterrorism resources and strategies can be more precisely and efficiently targeted and tailored instead of being constrained by “one-size-fits-all” responses geared to addressing broad issues (poverty, for instance) whose effectiveness is difficult, if not impossible, to measure.

Considering the sources of terrorism in their geographic context is especially critical for countering extremist ideologies. The potency and spread of an ideology is a function of three interrelated components: message (or story), dissemination, and resonance. All ideologies have a message to transmit and stories by which to sell it. Offering counterarguments to discredit

and debunk an opposing ideology is a key component of countering terrorism.⁸ However, this is not enough—there are many extreme ideas floating around, but they cannot attain significance unless large numbers of people are exposed to them. Thus, a second element in countering extremist ideologies requires channels of dissemination to be disrupted.

Nonetheless, in order for even a widely diffused message to mobilize significant support it must strike a chord that people gravitate to. For example, in his book on the evolution of warfare, Thomas Hammes points out that today's "fourth-generation" nonstate opponents include revolutionary leaders (and ideologies) that need people who feel disenfranchised; the fewer the disenfranchised, the fewer places there are for movements to take root. Rupert Smith views this type of struggle as part of an evolution from industrial warfare to "wars among the people."⁹ Success in this type of warfare requires getting clear messages through to target audiences, but it must be recognized that the message will always be filtered through the targets' own (e.g., personal, national, and cultural, etc.) references. This requires knowing the audience. To prevail in this type of warfare it is essential to recognize that the primary focus should be "the people" not the enemy; however, because the enemy is among the people, one needs to differentiate between the two.¹⁰ It is thus important to ascertain: what people and *where*?

Countering an ideology therefore requires determining where a message originates from, along what paths it has spread, and how the conditions by which it resonates vary from place to place. More specifically, precision in reducing the effect of sociodemographic "root causes" that give extreme ideologies their resonance calls for distinguishing between universal and place-specific drivers.

Geographic Approaches to Terrorism Analysis

Much has been written over the past 20 years on how nonstate actors, especially transnational networked terrorist movements (such as Al Qaeda), have been empowered by factors such as globalization to the disadvantage of states; consequently terrorist threats have been largely analyzed as violent transnational social movements.¹¹ However, "a geo-spatial focus has been traditionally absent from most terrorism research and remains largely unfamiliar to many terrorism researchers,"¹² which "has perpetuated the perception that terrorism is an amorphous, globalized threat which can manifest itself anywhere at any time."¹³ Although the literature on terrorism often employs geographic concepts, "they are not explicitly described or recognized as the primary constituents and vehicles for

explanation and understanding.”¹⁴ So although terrorism may have “socio-cultural underpinnings that have specific human geographic characteristics,”¹⁵ there have been few attempts to systematically identify and analyze the *geographical* origins of those engaged in transnational Islamist terrorist or jihadi movements and operations and their supporters, particularly in reference to their sociodemographic context.

Nevertheless there are geographic concepts that can be applied to the analysis of terrorism in general and in particular to source areas for operatives and radicalization. Murphy, for instance, suggests that terrorism occurs in three types of intersecting spaces: activity, perceptual, and policy.¹⁶ For example, certain areas (perceptual) may be viewed in particular ways by terrorists that explains why foreign fighters might flock to certain locales to engage in jihad (such as Syria) while not others (such as southern Thailand). Meanwhile governmental actions in specific places (policy) may affect how terrorists use, avoid, and perceive such spaces. For instance, the application of heavy-handed policies to certain areas of neighborhoods can increase the resonance of extremist antigovernment messages. Harmon¹⁷ examined the connections between terrorist spaces and found that there are “geographical bridges” that can link terrorist origin areas, targets, and sources of support as well as pathways along which persons, ideas, and resources travel. In a similar vein, Medina and Hepner argue that the process of migration as well as assimilation levels of diasporas can help drive terrorism.¹⁸ An additional geospatial distinction to consider, which relates to both terrorist spaces and migration, is that between resident (homegrown actors who operate and attack their country of origin) and foreign fighters (those who travel to other countries in which to act).¹⁹ Particularly relevant to the focus of this chapter is the idea that networks in “social space,” which refers to the actual and virtual spaces where social interactions (to include recruitment and ideological diffusion) among terrorist social networks occur, can be overlaid onto actual geographic space and thus mapped and further analyzed.²⁰ Hastings,²¹ for example, analyzed Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) support, activities, and members as spatially situated networked nodes of interconnected neighborhoods, cities, and regions rather than as individual persons participating in social networks disembodied from actual geographic locations.

The remainder of this chapter will review several geographically oriented examinations of key destinations (activity and perceptual spaces) for jihadist fighters and terrorists along with the sociodemographic and geographic characteristics of key source areas of both resident and foreign fighters and terrorists from 1979 through 2006 (and in some cases slightly beyond). The date range was chosen because it represents several key

stages from the origins of the global jihadist movement during the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, the Chechen conflict and Balkan Wars of the 1990s, and the height of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq as well as the so-called rise of homegrown Islamist terrorism in the West.

Terrorist Geography 1979–2006

Few analysts have approached the study of the evolution of transnational jihadism and the origins and radicalization of fighters and operatives from a geographical perspective. Rather, the main analytical innovation has been to analyze social networks. Some of these studies, however, have employed geographic considerations if not necessarily geographical analytical concepts and techniques. One of the best known and cited is Marc Sageman's study of terrorist networks, in which he identifies four clusters based upon geographical origin of 176 terrorists as well as the pattern of interaction between them. The results of his study raise several issues of geography that point to the need for more sociospatial analysis and exploration.

First, at the global (macro) scale there were identifiable (but uneven) clusters and patterns in terrorist origins. For instance, Al Qaeda's constituent nationalities and ethnic groups had been given responsibilities for particular regions in which familial relationships play key roles.²² Members recruited from family, friends, and neighbors. Second, there also appears to be regional and subregional (mesoscale) variations in terrorist source areas and drivers of support.²³ Indeed, while many individuals and groups shared a common ideological bent, they had their own leaders and aims, which were often parochial and localized.²⁴ Third, locally specific factors such as place of recruitment and family networks appeared to be significant.

In order to further identify such clusters and patterns as well as elucidate sociodemographic factors at play, a broader dataset must ultimately be consulted. Although, ready-to-use, open-source, geographically arranged data on transnational terrorists—data that is both precise and systematically organized—is difficult to find, a fair picture can be put together by comparing various references to and analyses of foreigners training or attending camps in so-called jihad theaters such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kashmir, and Southeast Asia. While not all fighters in these "jihad" were (or became) terrorists, it is well documented that jihadi veterans have formed the core of transnational Islamist terrorist groups across the globe. Further refinement can be obtained by examining the geographical origins of terrorists who have participated in operations in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere. Thus it is likely that by viewing the larger set of

fighters, the overall geography of Islamist terrorist operators and support can be analyzed, tracked, and possibly predicted.

Afghanistan and Environs

The 1979–1989 Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan saw thousands of Muslims from all over the world travel to Afghanistan and Pakistan to train and fight against the Soviets. Many (if not most) were not ideological extremists and eventually returned quietly home. However, many stayed abroad while others returned home to form the foundation of today's most radical movements. The majority of the volunteers who fought in the first Afghan war came from Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Algeria.²⁵ Excluding Pakistanis, the most prominent group were Saudis both in terms of fighters per capita (of total national population) and nearly so in absolute terms as well.

In 1995, according to Pakistani press reports, there were almost 5,000 foreign mujahideen registered in Pakistan (of whom many presumably fought or trained in Afghanistan or Pakistan).²⁶ The overwhelming majority were from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or Jordan. Egyptians and Saudis (along with Algerians) also dominated a 2000 report allegedly prepared by Osama bin Laden and published by the *Frontier Post*, which listed the nationalities of 2,359 young men who had “lost their lives in the jihad.”²⁷ A similar pattern can be seen among non-Afghans on the U.S. Department of Defense's official list of 522 detainees who passed through the Combatant Review Process in 2004–2005 at Guantanamo Bay, where again foreign fighters from Saudi Arabia and Yemen were the most numerous.²⁸

New York Times correspondent Carlotta Gall's 2002 report from the Northern Alliance Prison at Shiberghan in Afghanistan provides a similar picture. Of the 3,500 Al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners held there at the time, over 2,000 were Afghans, but of the foreigners more than 700 were Pakistanis, with the rest hailing from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, Sudan, Morocco, Iraq, the Muslim republics of Russia (excluding Chechnya), and Central Asia.²⁹ Meanwhile most of the senior Al Qaeda leadership reported killed in the Afghan-Pakistan border area in 2005 and 2006 were Arabs. For example, Egyptian born Abu Hamza Rabia, thought by some to be Al Qaeda's number three at the time, was killed in Pakistan in December 2005.³⁰ In the January 2006 missile strike that unsuccessfully targeted Ayman al-Zawahiri in Pakistan, several foreign-born Al Qaeda leaders are believed to have been killed. All were Arabs: Khalid Habib (aka Khalid al-Harbi, a Saudi national), Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrebi (Moroccan),

Mustafa Osman (Egyptian), Abu Obaidah al Masri (Egyptian), and Khalid Habib (Moroccan or Libyan).

A rash of suicide bombings in Afghanistan beginning in late 2005 set off a debate over the bombers' origins. The Taliban claimed that their bombers were locals. Afghan officials, however, insisted (pointing to a series of arrests that included non-Pashtun Pakistanis³¹) they were mainly Arabs and Pakistanis who usually entered the country from Pakistan.³² For example, in early February 2006 Afghanistan's Nimroz provincial governor, Ghulam Dastgir Azad, said nine foreigners were arrested in antiterrorist operations in Zaranj including one Iraqi, two Kashmiris (from Pakistani administered Kashmir), one Pakistani, and five Bangladeshis.³³

Aside from Arabs and Pakistanis, the only other foreigners that appeared in the region in significant numbers were from Central and South-east Asia. The involvement of Central Asians in Afghanistan-Pakistan appears to be related primarily to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which sometime in the late 1990s began providing fighters to the Taliban. The IMU, which has links to Al Qaeda, propounds a radical jihadi ideology, operates and recruits in several Central Asian countries, and receives extraregional funding; thus it can be considered a transnational group in its own right³⁴ (albeit at the subregional, not global level) with an area of operations that includes Afghanistan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

According to reporter Jason Burke, IMU members fighting in the fall of 2001 included Uzbeks, Tajiks, Chechens, and Uighurs.³⁵ By 2001, the International Crisis Group (ICG) estimated that 3,000 IMU fighters might have been in Afghanistan, with many likely to have been killed by U.S./Northern Alliance Forces or to have escaped into Tajikistan.³⁶ However, later estimates placed the group's strength at less than 700.³⁷ Although Chechens were widely reported to have fought in Afghanistan and Pakistan, existing open-source evidence suggested their numbers were fairly small, perhaps no more than several dozens.³⁸

Although significant numbers of Southeast Asians trained in Afghanistan and Pakistan, their exact numbers and the extent to which they engaged in actual combat operations is unclear. It is known that Indonesians, Malaysians, Filipinos, Thais, and Singaporeans trained together.³⁹ Indonesians, however, appear to have been by far the most numerous with Malaysians second. The International Crisis Group contends that over 200 Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) members trained in Afghanistan between 1985 and 1995, with an upper-end estimate of several thousand.⁴⁰ For instance, one Indonesian veteran claimed 3,000 Indonesians had fought in Afghanistan. A November 2005 statement by Indonesian intelligence officers claimed

that about 5,000 Indonesian Muslims were involved in militant activities in Afghanistan, southern Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Libya, most of whom are now thought to be living in several large cities in Java and West Sumatra.⁴¹ Many other outside analysts and insiders think the numbers were more likely in the hundreds.⁴²

Estimates after 9/11 suggested a continued but more limited Southeast Asian presence in Afghanistan-Pakistan. In November 2001, the Gerakan Pemuda Islam (GPI) claimed 300–350 Indonesians were in Afghanistan and Pakistan fighting with or preparing to fight with Taliban forces.⁴³ In September of 2003, Indonesian Gungun Rusman Gunawan (brother of Hambali) and 18 other Southeast Asians (including 13 Malaysians) were apprehended by Pakistani and U.S. agents in Karachi “for suspected militant activities.”⁴⁴

Balkans

The outbreak of civil war in Bosnia occurred at a critical time for foreign fighters in Afghanistan. The “jihad” against the Soviets had devolved into internecine fighting, while in 1993 Pakistan began closing mujahideen offices and deporting illegal foreign fighters whose home countries balked at allowing them to return.⁴⁵ Estimates of foreigners who fought in the Balkans ranged from several hundred to about 4,000, with 3,000–4,000 the number most commonly cited by reputable sources.⁴⁶ There is less precision and information regarding their national and ethnic breakdowns. Most analyses suggest non-Bosnian Muslim fighters hailed mainly from Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia.

Unlike in Afghanistan, Arabs were not the majority among foreign fighters.⁴⁷ However, the ideologically most extreme fighters do appear to have been Arabs.⁴⁸ They had a disproportionate impact relative to other foreigners, and are accused of committing most of the terrorist actions and atrocities committed by Muslim forces.⁴⁹ The Iranian fighters, on the other hand, were largely serving under state-sponsored rather than transnational jihadist auspices.

For example, in 1992 seven foreign fighters from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia were reportedly wounded near Travnik.⁵⁰ A letter sent to the UN Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (on the use of mercenaries) claimed that by the beginning of September 1992, 250 mujahideen had arrived in Bosnia from Turkey, Iran, Bahrain, and Qatar, and that in November 1992 an additional 43 (mainly Saudi) individuals fought against the Serbs at Teslic.⁵¹ A review of other

mercenaries listed in descriptions of incidents between 1992 through 1995 (in Babina Rijeka, Dervanta, Zenica, Orzen, Prijedor, Lijas, and Cakrcici) identified by nationality the following foreign Muslim fighters: 31 Turks, 4 Jordanians, 7 Tunisians, 4 Egyptians, 4 Saudis, 1 Yemeni, 1 Syrian, and 1 Bahraini, plus two other Maghrebis and an unidentified Arab. Aside from the Turks, the only non-Arab Muslims specified were one Pakistani and a Georgian.

Some Indonesians are believed to have fought in Bosnia but their actual number is indeterminate.⁵² Other than the case of Abdul Manaf Kasmuri (a former Malaysian army officer who was recruited into Al Qaeda after returning to Bosnia following his service there as a peacekeeper⁵³), there is little detailed evidence of Southeast Asians in Bosnia.

In 1998, foreign fighters also began entering Kosovo in order to fight alongside the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).⁵⁴ As in the case of Bosnia, press reports made frequent mention of Iranians, but they appear to have been there under state orders and sanction. However, most of the foreigners seem to have been Arabs. According to Fatos Klosi, then director of the Albanian intelligence service, three or four groups of foreign fighters composed of Egyptians, Saudi Arabians, Algerians, Tunisians, and Sudanese entered Kosovo via Albania.⁵⁵ Furthermore, as of November 2001 over 30 Islamic NGOs were operating in Kosovo, primarily funded by Saudi, Kuwaiti, and Gulf States' money, a number of which were regarded by the NATO Kosovo Force as having external terrorist links.⁵⁶

Chechnya and Kashmir

The number of foreigners reported fighting on the side of the Chechen rebels has been variously estimated at anywhere from a few dozen to 200. An Internet tribute to "Martyrs of Chechnya" gives the stories of four foreigners killed between 1999 and 2000: three were Turks (one previously fought in Kosovo and two had trained in Afghanistan), the other a Yemeni veteran of Bosnia.⁵⁷

Kashmir has also attracted foreign fighters, mostly Pakistani. But other nationalities have also been reported (though in lesser numbers), "Some of our Mujahideen brethren, whether Arab or non-Arab such as the Pakistanis and our brethren from Southeast Asia, have also helped."⁵⁸

Iraq

The U.S. invasion of Iraq opened up another theater for transnational "jihad" for the years covered in this analysis. Debate exists over the exact

proportion of the insurgency made up by outsiders, but estimates generally range from 4 to 10 percent.⁵⁹ Although the exact number of foreigners is disputed, their origins have been better studied (to the extent this is possible in such an environment) than in other cases. Several different analyses and reports give similar pictures of the origins of transnational fighters and terrorists operating in Iraq.

Iraq's human rights minister, Bakhtiar Amin, reported that 350 foreign fighters were being held by the United States in 2004. He provided the following breakdown of prisoner origins: Egypt (61), Saudi Arabia (59), Jordan (40), Syria (56), Sudan (35), Yemen (10), Tunisia (10), Palestinian Territories (8), and Lebanon (5).⁶⁰ A Saudi National Security Assessment Project concluded that 3,000 foreign fighters were present in Iraq as of late August 2005. Of these, 600 were Algerian, 550 Syrian, 500 Yemeni, 400 Egyptian, 450 Sudanese, and 350 Saudi (plus another 150 unspecified "others").⁶¹

Several reviews of extremist Web sites that posted tributes to foreigners "martyred" in Iraq also give similar results. An analysis by Reuven Paz of 154 foreigners killed in Iraq during February and March of 2005 (posted on Web sites associated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's and related groups) found that at least 94 percent were Arabs. Their particular countries of origin had the following distribution: Saudi Arabia (94), Syria (16), Iraq (13), Kuwait (11), Jordan (4), Lebanon (3), Libya (2), Algeria (2), Morocco (2), Yemen (2), Tunisia (2), Palestinian Territories (1), Dubai (1), and Sudan (1).⁶² A 2005 analysis conducted by *NBC News* of 400 militants killed in 2004 and 2005 revealed that they hailed from 21 countries, but with a disproportionate amount coming from Saudi Arabia (55 percent), Syria (13 percent), and North Africa (9 percent).⁶³ Another 3 percent came from Europe, the majority of whom are likely to have been North Africans or of North African descent. Similarly, records seized from a special operations raid in Sinjar, Iraq, revealed that from August 2006 to August 2007 the origin points of most foreign fighters entering Iraq were as follows: Saudi Arabia (41%), Libya (19%), Syria and Yemen (8% each), Algeria (7%), Morocco (6%), and Jordan (2%).⁶⁴

Southeast Asia

As indicated earlier Southeast Asians have been active in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but in general they have not played a significant role in global transnational terrorist operations. Generally, Southeast Asians have operated within their home countries. Of those that operated transnationally, most did so within the Southeast Asian region, where Indonesians were the

most numerous followed by Malaysians. Few non-Southeast Asians were reported operating in the region, and of these, Arabs were the majority.

In 1996, JI began shifting its training from Afghanistan to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps in Mindanao, and up to several hundred Indonesians may have participated.⁶⁵ Interrogation reports indicate the existence of classes containing both mixed Indonesians and Malaysians.⁶⁶ By August of 2003, over 200 JI members had been arrested in Southeast Asia, including nearly 90 each in Indonesia and Malaysia, and 30 in Singapore.⁶⁷ A list of 57 identified suspects detained in Malaysia since April 2001 on charges related to JI specifies three foreigners: an Indonesian, a Filipino, and a Pakistani.⁶⁸

According to the Philippine Department of National Defense, 46 foreigners with suspected Islamist terrorist connections were arrested, detained, or “neutralized” in the country since 9/11. Among these, the following ethnic origins were reported: Saudi (5), Egyptian (2), Jordanian (5), Moroccan (2), Sudanese (3), Iraqi (10), Palestinian (3), Indonesian (12), Singaporean (1), Vietnamese (2), and Japanese (1). Of the 31 JI members and Singapore citizens detained by Singaporean authorities in 2002 and 2003, the two non-Southeast Asian ethnic origin were of Arab and Pakistani descent.⁶⁹ The rest were mainly of local Malay or Indonesian descent. One of the few confirmed cases of foreign participation in the southern Thai insurgency was the 2006 arrest of Indonesian Sabri Amiruddin. Of Sageman’s 21 Southeast Asian subjects, the majority were from Indonesia (12), with 3 from Malaysia, 2 each from Singapore and Philippines, plus 2 nonethnic Southeast Asians (from Kuwait and Australia).⁷⁰

Western Attacks/Plots

The ethnic and geographic origins of terrorists who crossed borders to launch attacks in Western countries and of diaspora/“homegrown” terrorists reflects the wider pattern described earlier of involving many nationalities, but still with Arabs and Pakistanis the most prominently represented. Even though there has been much recent media and scholarly attention to the “new” threat of “homegrown” Islamist terrorism, it is not new but rather a phenomenon that took root in the Western world in the 1990s as, for example, when “resident and permanent Jihadist networks emerged in Spain.”⁷¹ Likewise, in the case of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, although much attention focused upon Ramzi Yousef—an outsider from Pakistan—the core of the operational cell was composed of men who were living and radicalized in the greater New York City/northern New Jersey area, and some investigators believe the original plot was homegrown.⁷² A

review of some specific plots is illustrative of the aforementioned patterns and trends.

Although Ramzi Yousef is widely regarded as the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the cell he tapped into had its genesis in a group of Arab immigrants from the Brooklyn area originally brought together by Egyptian-born El Sayyid Nosair. Among those convicted in connection with the bombing were Mohammed Salameh (born in Palestine), Nidal Ayyad (born in Jordan), Mahmoud Abouhalima (born in Egypt), Ibrahim Elgabrowni (born in Egypt), and Abdul Rahman Yasin (U.S.-born citizen, Iraqi-American).

The core of the 2000 Millennium Bombing Plot's North American cell were three Algerian-born Canadian and U.S. immigrants: Ahmed Ressay, Abdelghani Meskini, and Mokhtar Haouri. The Hamburg cell members who were at the heart of the 9/11 attacks were Arabs who for the most part had radicalized in Hamburg, Germany, including Egyptian-born Mohammed Atta, Marwan al Shehi of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Lebanese Ziad Jarrah, and Ramzi Binalshibh of Yemen.

The 2006 FBI list of 26 most wanted alleged terrorists indicted by federal grand juries on terrorism charges against U.S. targets was also dominated by Arabs. Twenty of the 26 were Arabs, with an overall ethnic-national breakdown of 5 Saudis, 5 Egyptians, 2 Yemenis, 1 Iraqi-American, 1 Libyan, 1 Comoro, 2 Kenyans, and 2 Filipinos (Moros). On the list were also 2 Palestinians and 4 Lebanese, but they were not associated with transnational jihadist terrorist groups.⁷³ A survey of 38 terrorist suspects arrested and charged in the United States between 9/11 and 2006 yielded a breakdown of 9 American-born converts and 28 immigrants (mainly first-generation), of whom 17 were Arabs and 12 Pakistani. Of the 12 named suspects arrested in the 2006 Toronto terror plot, over half were first- or second-generation immigrants from Sri Lanka (1), Somalia (2), Egypt (1), Trinidad and Tobago/West Indies (2), and Pakistan (2).

Seven of the nine primary suspects from a Melbourne, Australia, terror plot broken up in 2005 were of Lebanese origin, one an immigrant from Algeria, and the other an Australian convert, while among the eight key suspects from a 2005 Sydney-based plot were a Bangladeshi immigrant, one male of Indonesian descent, a Bosnian convert, and several ethnic Lebanese.

It would appear that recruitment for jihad in Europe was somewhat structured along national and ethnic lines.⁷⁴ Of the individuals arrested in Spain for belonging to Islamist terror networks between 1995 and 2005, there were 83 Algerians, 40 Moroccans, 21 Syrians, 12 Pakistanis, 2 Lebanese, 1 Mauritanian, and 1 Afghan.⁷⁵ According to a 2004 U.K. intelligence service list of 100 Islamist activists suspected of being involved

in terrorist activities, the majority were British citizens of Pakistani descent.⁷⁶ Indeed, three of the four London subway bombers were of Pakistani descent as were the majority of the first 19 suspects identified in the 2006 U.K. airline bombing plot. In the Netherlands second-generation terrorists were predominantly of Moroccan origin who were either born in the country or moved there at a very young age.⁷⁷

Worldwide, in case after case, the social networks in which radicalization occurs among diaspora populations are highly localized with friendship, community, neighborhood, family, and marriage ties playing important roles.⁷⁸ Initial evidence indicates that both the Sydney and Melbourne cells fit the “bunch of guys” profile, basically a group of friends whose radical beliefs and militancy incubate, escalate, and intensify in an upward spiral over time. Most of the nine members of the Melbourne cell, for instance, were old school friends.

In addition to friendship, family and community ties are another common and recurring element in cell formation and radicalization. The suspects in the 3/11 Madrid bombings include several sets of brothers and cousins.⁷⁹ Among the 9/11 hijackers were several cousins (Ahmed, Hamza, and Saeed al-Ghamdi) as well as sets of brothers (Salim and Nawaf al-Hamzi, Wail and Waleed al-Sheri). Other plots in which family members participated together include the 1993 World Trade Center,⁸⁰ Singapore-JI,⁸¹ USS *Cole*, and Bali nightclub bombings.⁸²

Families have also been found to provide both material and moral support to prospective jihadists. For example, Umer Hayat (a Pakistani immigrant arrested in the United States in June 2005 along with his American-born son Hamid) told investigators that he provided an allowance of \$100 plus paid-for airline tickets knowing his son intended to attend a jihadi training camp in Pakistan.⁸³ Madrid 3/11 suspect Mohammed Alfalah is thought to have been provided a cell phone by his father so he could communicate his intent to die a “martyr’s” death.⁸⁴ Several relatives (siblings and spouses) of London 7/21 suspects have been charged with helping suspects avoid arrest.⁸⁵

In-laws, too, often helped foster entry into terrorist circles.⁸⁶ The act of marriage has also been commonly used by terrorists for purposes of immigration, cover, and burrowing into a community.⁸⁷ Alleged members of the Al Qaeda Madrid cell suspected of having assisted the 9/11 attackers (and possibly the 3/11 bombers) are thought to have used marriage to establish themselves in Madrid.⁸⁸ Brothers-in-law Antonio Castro and Jose Emilio Trashorras are suspected of being the critical links in the 3/11 explosives procurement chain. Muriel Degauque, the Belgian woman suicide bomber who blew herself up while attacking American troops in Iraq on

November 9, 2005, was a convert to Islam whose radical beliefs and links to terrorist circles crystallized through her second marriage to a Moroccan-born extremist.⁸⁹ Toronto suspects Zakaria Amad and Ahmad Mustafa Ghany are thought to be brothers-in-law.

Nearly all of the Melbourne cell members were school friends prior to their suspected radicalization and terrorist activities. Khaled Cheikho is the uncle of fellow Sydney suspect Moustafa Cheikho, while Melbourne suspects Ahmad and Ezzit Raad are brothers. Many of the Toronto suspects were also school friends from the communities of Meadowvale and Scarborough. Members of the Sydney cell have connections to an earlier terror plot against Sydney, associated with a cell led by Willie Brigitte. These linkages appear to have been built or nurtured by a combination of familial and jihadist training camp relationships. French officials claim Moustafa Cheikho and Brigitte trained together with the LeT in Pakistan, while Hasan is alleged to have helped Brigitte find a flat. Brigitte, in turn, was introduced to his wife, Melanie Brown (a good friend of Khaled Sharrouf's sister Miriam), by Sharrouf's brother-in-law, Mamadou Ndaw, who was later deported to Senegal on security grounds.⁹⁰

Cells in the West generally tended to be geographically as well as socially localized, coalescing around particular neighborhoods and/or institutions (such as mosques, schools, bookstores, prayer centers, etc.) that served as key nodes between local groups and wider geographic and social connections. In the United States, for example, the following cities/areas (among others) have been persistent nodes of Al Qaeda and other Sunni Islamist operations, support, and recruitment: Detroit, Boston, Brooklyn, northern New Jersey, South Florida, northern Virginia, Oklahoma City, Tucson, Los Angeles, and San Diego.⁹¹ In France, the area around Lille and Roubaix has long served as fertile ground for recruitment, as has the Lyon area, with the most important recruiting grounds in France appearing to have been the rundown suburbs of Paris and Marseilles.⁹²

Some specific examples of cell localization include the Madrid train bombings, 1993 World Trade Center bombing and subsequent New York City landmarks plot, 2005 Sydney-Melbourne arrests, London subway bombings, and the 2006 Toronto- and Miami-based plots. Many of the Madrid bombing suspects had close ties to particular cities (such as Tangier and Tetuan in northern Morocco) and the Madrid neighborhoods of Lavapiés and Leganes,⁹³ while three of the four London subway bombers hailed from the Beeston neighborhood of Leeds. Thirteen of the initial 19 suspects in the 2006 U.K. airliner-bombing plot hailed from East London, with nine from Walthamstow in particular. Another four came from the Buckinghamshire town of High Wycombe.

Most of the Melbourne suspects were school friends prior to their suspected radicalization and terrorist activities.⁹⁴ At least four lived within walking distance of each other. About half the Sydney cell lived within walking distance of each other (and Willie Brigitte) in the Wiley Park area. Of the first 12 suspects named in the 2006 Toronto terror case, most came from two localized clusters. One was in the suburb of Scarborough, where four suspects lived. Five other unnamed suspects also attended high school together in Scarborough. Six other suspects lived in nearby Meadowvale and Mississauga, in close proximity to the Meadowvale High School and Ar-Rahman Islamic Center.⁹⁵

Edges

A more problematic situation over the study period is presented by areas peripheral to the main terrorist and jihadist theaters. Although there were clear concentrations and cores of terrorist activity and support, it is widely accepted that groups like Al Qaeda have a global presence, and as the preceding sections illustrate, individuals from many countries participated in transnational terrorist and “jihadist” activities. But what is less clear is the extent to which support for Islamist terrorism and related ideologies had spread (or was spreading) to areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, Bangladesh, and southern Thailand.

Furthermore while many countries and areas shared similar sociodemographic profiles to the core countries, they did not rise to the same level of contribution to transnational terrorism. For instance, Kenya and Tanzania were permissive environments for terrorist operations, as yet over the period of this analysis remained relatively unpromising grounds for high levels of local recruitment and support. Despite a rise in extremist Wahabist ideology in the 1980s and 1990s, extremists may even have, for a period at least, lost ground because they appeared to have alienated their fellow local (more tolerant and mainly Sufi) Muslims. It is likely that sociodemographic vulnerabilities in countries such as these were being mitigated by other factors such as cultural differences (for example, in many ways the phenomena of Islamist terrorism may have been as much or more a function of Arab and Pakistani culture and place-specific sociodemographic and political factors than merely the Muslim religion), local religious interpretations, geographic proximity to “jihad lands” (Middle East and Central Asia, including the Balkans, Iraq, Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Kashmir) and centers of ideological innovation (e.g., Egypt and Saudi Arabia) or early historic diffusion (Pakistan and Indonesia), level of global connectivity (or lack thereof), and historic as well as recent geopolitical

events. However, the deep political, economic, and social problems in many “edge” areas, such as Nigeria, raised the specter that if left unaddressed they become more promising source areas and radicalization nodes in the future, particularly among already marginalized Muslim communities.⁹⁶ This question will be further addressed in the conclusion of this chapter.

Geographic and Sociodemographic Variations and Patterns 1979–2006

The preceding discussion suggests that there are places and spaces at various scales from macro (e.g., regions and countries) to micro (e.g., cities, neighborhoods, and communities) that produced a disproportionate share of the people involved in transnational Islamist terrorist and related activities. However, the role sociodemographic factors play—and their level of significance—within these areas can demonstrate similarity as well as variation from place to place. Therefore, addressing underlying sociodemographic factors requires first identifying where the key geographic nodes are (as well as emerging diffusion paths and nodes), and then how sociodemographic factors may specifically have influenced terrorist recruiting and support in these areas. The following section seeks to illustrate this point by examining some notable geographic patterns.

Geographic Cores

It is clear that Arabia (and the Arab diaspora) produced the most participants in transnational jihadist and terrorist activities, and was thus transnational Islamist terrorism’s geographic core over the study period. Within this Arab core, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, Morocco, and Algeria appear to have been particularly prominent. There were also three important secondary cores. Of these, Pakistan was arguably the most important both regionally and internationally. The other two core areas were Southeast and Central Asia, particularly Indonesia and Uzbekistan. Of course, Islamist terrorism and support for related extremist ideologies was present well beyond these cores, but in places where geographic cultural, political, historic, and other barriers were either limiting or at least slowing the spread of terrorist ideologies and the numbers of active domestic and transnational participants.

Other studies using different methodologies reveal a similar geographic pattern to this one. Sageman, as cited earlier, identified four key clusters: Central Staff (Al Qaeda and global terrorist leaders, mainly Arabs), Core Arab (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, and Kuwait), Maghreb Arab (Morocco,

Tunisia, and Algeria), and Southeast Asia. Sageman also briefly mentions the importance of microscale geographic factors, singling out local “places of recruitment” as one of the circumstances that facilitates “joining the jihad” movement.⁹⁷

Incident and casualty figures also provide anecdotal evidence of Arabia as a geographical core for terrorism, both resident and transnational. According to the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism database, of the 38,464 fatalities from terrorist attacks between 1968 and June 2006, 17,279 (approximately 44 percent) occurred in the Middle East/Persian Gulf region. Of these, 14,268 were characterized as caused by “international” terrorist attacks, of which 4,508 (or about 32 percent) occurred in the Middle/East Persian Gulf Area.⁹⁸ In 2005, the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center reported approximately 40,000 individuals killed or wounded in terrorist attacks for the year. Based upon a combination of demographic analysis and reporting of the countries, they concluded that 10,000–15,000 of the victims were Muslims (most in Iraq), with the Middle East and South Asia bearing the brunt. Although these are aggregate figures, including victims from attacks by all groups (not just Islamist), it is nonetheless clear that the Middle East (which is predominately Arab) is also the world’s main locus of terrorism in terms of victims.⁹⁹

General Core Sociodemographic Characteristics

If we take a macroscale look at the Arab-Pakistan core and Central and Southeast Asian secondary cores (centered upon Uzbekistan and Indonesia) some shared sociodemographic characteristics in terms of level of development, demography, corruption, and environmental sustainability are visible. All of the main core countries fall in the “medium” category of the Human Development Index (HDI), ranked between 77th (Saudi Arabia) and 141st (Sudan).¹⁰⁰ In terms of overall HDI rank, most of the major terrorist-producing countries fall in the bottom half (88th or lower) of the 177 countries ranked; Yemen is the only one characterized as “low” (151st) in the HDI.¹⁰¹ The only Arab countries that score in the high category are the small Gulf States of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and the UAE.¹⁰²

A more striking pattern appears in terms of Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI) scores, where (with the exception of Tunisia) every Arab country ranked in the bottom half of the 146 countries surveyed, as did Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and the other Central Asian “stans.”¹⁰³ The collection of indicators and variables that form the 2005 ESI provide among other things an alternative to GDP and HDI for gauging a country’s condition.¹⁰⁴ The ESI also provides a tool for measuring potential to achieve

global-scale policy goals such as the Millennium Development Goals, which explicitly commit the world community to making progress in achieving environmental sustainability within the context of a broader global agenda aimed at reducing poverty and malnutrition, and expanding education and health care.¹⁰⁵

The majority of core countries also scored in the bottom half of the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). The CPI rates perception of corruption based on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (highly clean). Only the small Gulf States of Oman, UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain plus Jordan scored over 5; nearly all the rest scored below 3.5.¹⁰⁶

Demographically, a distinct overall pattern also existed. According to a study by Population Action International (PAI), countries with a youth bulge were more than twice as likely to experience an outbreak of civil conflict. In this study, all Arab countries (with the exception of the small Gulf States) and Central Asian countries (including Pakistan) were assessed at “high risk” in terms of youth-bulge-related instability.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, countries with low availability of cropland and/or fresh water were 1.5 times more likely to experience civil conflict; of these, countries of sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East were most at risk. Countries experiencing the overlapping demographic factors of youth bulge with rapid urbanization and/or low cropland or fresh water availability have a particularly high risk of conflict and instability. Not surprisingly, all Arab countries (again with the exception of the small Gulf States) plus Pakistan and Uzbekistan were also categorized in the PAI report as “very high” or “high risk” for overall demographic stress.¹⁰⁸ The only exception among the core countries to these demographic profiles was Indonesia.

Although general core areas can be identified that seem to exhibit certain common sociodemographic characteristics, this should not lead to the conclusion that these factors acted in the exact same ways or that their effects were evenly influential and distributed within and among a core area’s internal regions and populations. Similarly, sociodemographic profiles of individuals (the lowest possible level of analysis) also varied. So while most operatives seem to have gotten involved in terror groups during their middle to late 20s,¹⁰⁹ this varied somewhat by region while the profile of wider non-operational supporters may further differ from that of the active players.¹¹⁰

Arab Core

Although Arabia was clearly the core of Islamist transnational terrorism, there were variations in operator and support patterns within and between countries and terrorist groups. In Algeria, for instance, the return of

Afghan veterans and increase in popularity of religious extremism (and the ensuing civil war) occurred against the backdrop of a severe economic downturn. According to analysis by Testas of economic factors and their relationship to violence, the economic decline of 1988–1992 did not cause political violence or Islamist extremism in Algeria, but rather fueled and magnified social discontent, the role of religion, political grievances, and ethnic hostility.¹¹¹ This had an additional transnational dimension, as unemployment and conflict combined to create a dramatic expansion in the number of Algerians living and moving abroad since 1992, helping set the stage for later diaspora-related terrorism.

Compared to Algeria and other Arab core states, Tunisia supplied relatively few fighters to foreign jihads, transnational terrorist operations, or foreign “homegrown” diaspora cells. During the 1960s and 1970s, living standards increased similarly between Tunisia and Algeria. However, Algeria’s economic decline and ensuing civil war saw incomes decline in Algeria from 1985 through 1998, while rising substantially in Tunisia, which may help explain some of the differences in political stability and political violence between the two countries.¹¹² Indeed in terms of HDI, CPI, and ESI, Tunisia outscored all the core Arab states (with the exception of HDI, where Saudi Arabia scored better).

The influence of sociodemographic factors varied, however, between and within countries as well as between demographic strata and terrorist organizations. For example, in Egypt, the Gama Islamiyya had a distinct geographical core and a bifurcated recruitment demographic.¹¹³ Upper Egypt, from al-Minya to the southern Nubian Desert—one of Egypt’s most distressed regions, with wages 30 percent lower than the national average and infant mortality 50 percent higher—was the birthplace and heartland of Gama Islamiyya.¹¹⁴ Several of its leaders were recruited from among the region’s many unemployed university graduates, while the sale of cheap food was used to draw in foot soldiers and supporters from the urban poor.¹¹⁵

Terrorist operatives also vary in source and background in Saudi Arabia; however, some distinct geographic clustering seems to have occurred. Among the 12 Saudi 9/11 hijackers, particular geographic, tribal, and family nodes stand out. Nine of the 12 came from two geographical clusters and over half did not have a university education. Four came from a cluster of three towns in the isolated and underdeveloped al Bahah region; all of them shared the same tribal affiliation and none had a university degree. Another five hailed from Asir Province, a poor region in southwestern Saudi Arabia bordering Yemen, and all of them had begun university studies. The remaining three—al Suqami, Majed Moqed, and Salem al Hazmi—came from various other towns and cities. Suqami had little education,

Moqed was a university dropout, and al Hamzi had problems with alcohol and petty theft.¹¹⁶

Saudis engaged in terrorist and insurgent activities in Iraq come from various locations, but with the South, Hijaz, and Najd being the three main clusters.¹¹⁷ Most were affiliated with prominent conservative tribes, but unlike the 9/11 hijackers, many were middle class, employed, and educated.¹¹⁸ In Yemen as well there were varying demographic and geographic nodes of support for Islamist terrorist groups. For instance, support for Al Qaeda came from both ideologically sympathetic Islamists (including some returnees from the anti-Soviet war and training camps in Afghanistan) as well as from specific tribal areas. The Bakil tribes of the Marib area (in northern Yemen) were perhaps the strongest Yemeni supporters of Al Qaeda.¹¹⁹ However, the Bakil are not necessarily motivated by ideology, but rather by tribal, political, and economic reasons, and have shown a willingness to accept support from all quarters.¹²⁰ Thus in order to weaken Bakil support for Al Qaeda, Katz proposed a two-pronged approach. First, at the local scale, short-term aid could be provided to tribal leaders who did not cooperate with (or who act against) Al Qaeda. This could be combined with a long-term program to eliminate tribal grievances against the central government and develop the economy and educational system at the national level (thereby allowing the government to free tribal members from dependence upon shaykhs who required aid from outside actors such as Al Qaeda).¹²¹

Diasporas: Patterns within Patterns

Roy described Muslim diaspora members and other Western country residents involved with terrorist networks as falling into one of three main categories:

Students, who came from Middle Eastern countries to study in the West; second-generation Muslims, who were either born in the West or came as infants; and converts. The students (for example, the World Trade Center pilots) are usually middle or upper class, and all were educated in technical or scientific disciplines. The second-generation Muslims emanate from the working class and disfranchised urban youths. The converts are a more complex category. Most of the individuals who gravitate towards these three categories are “new Muslims,” either born-again or converts.¹²²

In terms of ethnic origin, as discussed earlier, Arabs and Pakistanis were the most active players in transnational Islamist terrorist activities among

diaspora communities. Given that their new home countries did not fit into the same relatively grim macrolevel sociodemographic categories as their ancestral homelands, it could lead one to conclude that sociodemographic factors had little to do with diaspora involvement in terrorism.

However it appears both supply and demand drivers, some of which are sociodemographic in nature, were at work. On the supply side, the existence of large communities with skills and backgrounds amenable to the conduct of transnational terrorism (e.g., language, experience of living and working abroad, and possession of passports, etc.) were attractive to Al Qaeda and like-minded organizations.¹²³ Meanwhile, on the demand side, disaffected communities or individuals who felt marginalized or alienated locally, while identifying with wider narratives of grievance, provided fertile support bases.

The social roots of Islamist violence may also have been strengthened as a consequence of the resentment of foreigners by host populations, the difficulties of coping with modernization versus traditional culture, unemployment, and the unfulfilled expectations of second- and third-generation immigrants, which was exacerbated by financial support from Muslim countries that enabled immigrants to build and promote their own separate communities¹²⁴ as well as facilitate the spread of radical ideologies. This sort of ideology targets actual individuals struggling with doubts about their faith and identity, and appeals to uprooted, disaffected youth in search of an identity beyond the lost cultures of their parents and thwarted expectations of a better life in the West.¹²⁵ For example, as Roane observed, in “central Montreal more than 15,000 of its 1 million citizens [were] of Algerian origin. . . [Many] say they [were] being denied jobs because of their ethnicity, and immigrants of all stripes complained of harassment by the authorities.”¹²⁶

So while in absolute terms diaspora communities may have found themselves in better sociodemographic situations than their counterparts in origin countries, in relative terms they did not necessarily find themselves in as good a situation as other citizens in their host countries, and may have been subject to more corruption (or less government attention), discrimination, and hopelessness than the population at large. This in turn provided fertile ground for extremist ideologies to resonate and for individuals to be turned against host countries and societies. This general pattern, with place-specific differences, can be seen in the examples of France and Spain. In France, Islamist terrorist organizations and networks have, according to Jordan and Horsburgh, “captivated young second generation immigrants on the dole or immersed in a world of crime, taking advantage of the solidarity in marginal neighborhoods of Paris and other French cities.”¹²⁷

Meanwhile in Spain, members of such organizations and networks have generally been first-generation immigrants from middle-class backgrounds. However, they generally were neither highly educated nor enjoyed highly paid employment.¹²⁸

According to Kaldor, a key driver of “new wars” (of which transnational Islamist terrorism would be one form) is that local particularisms, whether in the form of ethnic identity or religious affiliation, have been supported from afar by diaspora populations, through fundraising, political contacts, and weapons purchases. This is a pattern that fits with events such as 9/11 with the exception that the attackers hit the United States directly (rather than indirectly supporting violence in their homelands).¹²⁹ This “exception” is actually quite significant, because it represents an example of a “reverse diaspora war” in which those disconnected from both land of origin and new home turn on their hosts even while the ideology that drives them may be funded by and exported from the old core. Evidence suggests, for example, that few children of Europe’s Muslim immigrants returned to wage jihad in the land of their ancestors, such as Algeria or Morocco.¹³⁰ So, while the ideology may be transnational, the reasons for its resonance may in fact be more local.

This indeed appears to be the case with diaspora support of Islamist terrorism, and is significant because it means that on a macrolevel there may be similarities in support, but local drivers and grievances (such as socioeconomic and demographic factors) may be quite different. Thus even among diaspora communities there are variations in recruiting and support patterns. This is compounded by cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and other differences between and within diaspora communities. Because of these differences, Muslims in Western Europe, for instance, “cannot be expected to share a unique public space, nor similar geopolitical visions. Therefore it is necessary to focus on one nationally defined group in one country” rather than Muslims as a single entity.¹³¹ For example, in an analysis of Dutch Moroccan Muslim Web sites and chat rooms, Mamadouh found that “although solidarity with fellow Muslims in the Netherlands and the rest of the world is strong . . . [the label] ‘Muslim’ was used to refer mainly or exclusively to Arabs and the Arab world . . . or even more specifically the Moroccan community.”¹³² This further suggests that in many cases what appear to be macroscale universal grievances may be also locally and particularly rooted.

Across the board, however, localized concentrations of crime and marginalized immigrant communities have provided fertile ground for both radicalization and recruitment, as well as community disempowerment. Misinterpretation around incidents such as the London subway bombings

and Sydney and Melbourne cases helped propel the thesis that many diaspora terrorists were “clean skins” or “lilywhites”—in other words, people who were unknown to police and security authorities.¹³³ Typical of this line of reasoning is Australian journalist Martin Chulov’s contention (based on the London bombings) of the threat posed by home-grown “cleanskin” terrorists: “Like a mutant virus with no cure, they are random, unpredictable and almost impossible to stop before they wreak their havoc.”¹³⁴ This, along with the fact that many Islamist terrorists came from middle-class backgrounds, obscured the importance of the role that low-level, localized crime played in radicalization, recruitment, networking, logistics, and operations.

In fact, low-level criminality played a role in nearly every successful attack, as well as in most of the more well-known failed attempts, by Islamist terrorists cells in the West since the early 1990s. About a quarter of Sageman’s subjects (all North African Arabs in Europe and North America) were involved in petty criminal activities. Other cells in Western countries have had 20–75 percent of members with some type of criminal background. While this obviously does not mean most Islamist terrorists come from criminal backgrounds or are merely criminals, it does suggest that the sociodemographic factors conducive to criminality in certain areas among particular demographic groups contribute to the level of vulnerability to terrorist recruitment and support.

Low-level criminality and prisons played important roles in the lead-up to several recent incidents. For example, several of the suspects involved in the 3/11 Madrid attacks have records of drug trafficking, while trading in hashish and Ecstasy was critical to the operation and paid for cars, safe houses, and explosives. Key suspects also spent time in Spanish prisons.

Criminality is also common among Islamist terrorists in Britain. According to the British Parliament’s cross-party Intelligence and Security Committee, the alleged leader of the London 7/7 bombings, Mohammed Sidique Khan, was known to police for suspected petty fraud.¹³⁵ There has also been some speculation that fellow London bomber Germaine Lindsay had been a drug dealer.¹³⁶ And at least three of the five suspects in the failed 7/21 bombing attempt had engaged in prior criminal activities such as robbery, shoplifting, gang membership, and passport fraud.¹³⁷

In another example, four of the 10 key suspects of the 2005 terrorist plot in Melbourne, Australia, had criminal pasts. Aimen Joud had prior convictions on firearms and theft charges, while Fadal Sayadi had also been convicted on a minor theft charge.¹³⁸ Several suspects have also been accused of involvement in a stolen credit card number scheme.¹³⁹ Several members of the Sydney cell were linked to Janel Saleh, who was serving time in a Lebanon prison on weapons charges.¹⁴⁰

In addition to its use in raising funds for terrorist attacks, crime played a role in producing sympathy for extremist ideologies and/or driving a wedge between local communities and their governments either in the form of intimidation and extortion by extremists or just by inadequate (but sometimes oppressive) policing. For instance, Saudi businessmen and wealthy Palestinians who reportedly made large contributions to various terrorist groups may have done so, in some instances, in response to blackmail or as a subtle form of “protection payment.”¹⁴¹ In Italy, Islamist extremists operating out of the Islamic Cultural Institute (ICI) in Milan set up a collection racket whereby “a 30 percent surcharge was extracted from ‘fearful’ local Muslim businessmen.”¹⁴² Meanwhile in Kenya and Tanzania, the police have limited capability to provide basic law and order for local communities and furthermore are widely hated and feared—so much so that according to one Tanzanian Muslim NGO representative, “If we saw bad people we wouldn’t go to the police.”¹⁴³ Overall, as many scholars and practitioners have observed, the linkages between criminal activity and terrorism cannot be overlooked.¹⁴⁴

Strategy and Policy Implications

Sociodemographic factors clearly seem to contribute to the resonance of extremist ideologies as well as the growth and diffusion of passive and active support for them even though the manner in which particular factors play a role and their significance varies across space and from place to place. Not surprisingly, research has shown that social and economic development policies can weaken local support for terrorist activities, discourage recruiting, and can be used as a stick to discourage terrorism in certain contexts.¹⁴⁵ In fact, the most popular measure cited by 2,000 Arab adults (in the United States, Egypt, Kuwait, UAE, Lebanon, and Jordan) when polled on how to win the war on terror was to “provide development aid to poor countries.”¹⁴⁶ The ability of development policies to inhibit terrorism, however, depends upon their implementation, while inadequate policies are likely to inflate expectations and even renew support for terrorism.¹⁴⁷

Since sociodemographic factors have geographic attributes, effectively and efficiently implementing policies that address them requires precision and understanding of macro- and microlevel patterns. Because the type and influence of sociodemographic factors varies from place to place, there is no silver bullet strategy that can be broadly applied. While laudable, grand macroscale endeavors aimed at ending corruption, youth unemployment, or poverty in the Muslim world are not likely to bear fruit in the near

future. Furthermore, insufficient, watered-down, unsustainable efforts or even concerted ones (but in the wrong places) are likely to have little effect or even exacerbate the problem. The need to identify underlying drivers and actors at local levels will become increasingly important as the global Islamist terrorist movement continues to morph, atomize, and diversify.

To achieve precision in implementation requires more refined knowledge of the geographical and sociodemographic origins of both operators (supply) and supporters (demand). There is a tremendous amount of information and detail about Islamist terrorist operators and suspects available through open sources. Although the data is diffuse and of varying quality, painstaking data gathering and analysis of hundreds (if not thousands) of known suspects and operators should yield considerable specific geographic and related socioeconomic data. A much richer source, however, is available to government, intelligence, and law enforcement; there are thousands of names on watch-lists, detainee and prisoners lists, as well as rich biographic and demographic data from interrogations and suspect debriefings to which the application of available data mining techniques can yield enormous results.

In order to identify and predict key socioeconomic and demographic factors and related vulnerable populations, more resources should be directed against the support side of Islamist terrorism, as opposed to active terrorist operatives.¹⁴⁸ However, since active terrorists are likely to hail from communities and areas where support is strong, geographic analyses of active terrorist operatives can help locate areas in which support is likely to be strong, thus helping pinpoint areas for more precise studies and policies targeted at understanding and addressing the sociodemographic support environment.

Inputting, mapping, and analyzing such data using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) permits multiscale mapping of clusters and diffusion pathways of terrorist recruits as well as popular support. It can also help identify, analyze, and assess underlying socioeconomic drivers at play in current as well as emerging local hotspots and key nodes. In terms of homeland security and counterterrorism, GIS are already employed for consequence management, and are finding increased use for law enforcement intelligence evaluation and threat detection, due to their ability to consolidate diverse strands of information into a comprehensive view.¹⁴⁹

There are a number of models and methodological approaches that can be used both quantitatively and qualitatively to guide and frame GIS-based analyses such as social network analysis and autoregressive time-series modeling (e.g., Enders and Sandler¹⁵⁰). Of particular value, especially in delineating and predicting both active and passive support (as well as

fence-sitter) populations may be techniques from medical geography and epidemiology. The adaptation of techniques such as hierarchical diffusion, distance decay, stochastic diffusion, and gravity models, as well as analysis of spatial autocorrelation, can be used to help identify key node localities and populations as well as ideological and support diffusion paths. Techniques used to analyze “transformed space” (e.g., representing distances on roads by travel time rather than actual mileage) can be used to assess the effects of the Internet and rapid transit on terrorist geography.

Medical geography approaches can help assess key nodes and diffusion paths as well as identify barriers and countervailing factors. In opposition to networks that pattern and support diffusion, barriers slow and shape diffusion producing three effects: blocking, reflection, and slowing.¹⁵¹ Reflecting barriers, for instance, channel and intensify the local impact of a diffusion process while blocking its spread to another locale.¹⁵² For example, authoritarian crackdowns in Middle Eastern countries may have channeled and intensified diffusion of active support(ers) to diaspora communities in open Western societies, while cultural barriers may be slowing or limiting the spread in places such as East Africa. Barrier analysis combined with network and locational analysis can thus help identify which populations or communities are most vulnerable to infection (whether from a disease or extremist ideology) from those that may be somewhat inoculated by other factors. Thus appropriate countermeasures can be developed and prioritized. The aforementioned analytical tools and approaches can be used to guide the development of multiscale strategies geared at targeting and addressing underlying sociodemographic drivers in global and regional core areas and emerging hotspots, with emphasis on tailored efforts in key localities.

Once the key localities and demographic groups to be targeted are delineated, there already exist a number of tried and tested approaches that can be applied. In particular there is a need to empower communities and civil society to defeat terrorism and its underlying support from within, in a manner akin to how the *movimento antimafia* helped repress the Sicilian mafia during the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁵³ Finally, expectations for socioeconomic development strategies and community-based programs in combating terrorism must be realistic. While effective and well-implemented social and economic development programs can inhibit terrorism, they cannot eliminate it. In addition to socioeconomic and demographic drivers, it cannot be forgotten that powerful political and religious grievances and motivations exist. As Cragin and Chalk observe, development “is most effective when” it is integrated into a “wider political, military, and community-relations” approach.¹⁵⁴

There are three related strategies that have particular promise for use at the local and community level and that if implemented in an integrated fashion, in key areas, and on a wider front, could contribute significantly to minimizing socioeconomic contributors to terrorism among key demographics.

Grassroots Engagement and Community Development

Once key local areas and populations have been identified, it is important that any socioeconomic development programs be appropriate and suitable to local conditions as well as sustainable at the local level. One way to ensure this is to start with grassroots engagement through employment of bottom of pyramid (BOP) approaches. Throughout the world, BOP approaches that have involved collaboration among the poor themselves, civil organizations, governments, and private firms have proven effective in producing sustainable economic progress.¹⁵⁵ According to General Charles Wald, former Deputy Commander of U.S. European Command, such tools are well suited to diminishing the causes of terrorism by providing investment and employment that lead to long-term quality of life improvements.¹⁵⁶

Community Policing

Community development efforts must also include a security element. Local communities often need protection from local extremists and criminals as well as from intimidation by majority populations and even corrupt police. There is also a need to identify and gather intelligence on terrorist operatives or those vulnerable to recruitment at the local level, especially in the case of resident or homegrown terrorists.

Community policing techniques can help bridge the developmental and security aspects of dealing with the socioeconomic and demographic roots of terrorism at the local level. According to Chief Deputy Jose Docobo of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in Tampa, Florida, "The U.S. Department of Justice has defined community policing as a philosophy that focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that include aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem-solving, community engagement, and partnerships."¹⁵⁷ Many of the practices employed in community policing are natural complements to the type of geographic analysis and BOP approaches discussed in this chapter such as the use of GIS, data collection, and analysis protocols for obtaining and evaluating intelligence and assessing vulnerability, not only to the threat of terrorism, but also to underlying social, economic, and demographic drivers of support.

Deradicalization and Rehabilitation

Empowering moderate voices—especially among the young—to engage in effective debate within their societies is an important action that Western governments could take in order to reduce anti-Western sentiment among Arabs.¹⁵⁸ Some of the potentially most effective actors for combating terrorist support, ideology, and recruitment in this vein are former terrorists who can be sent back to their communities (similar to how former gang members and substance abusers have been used in gang and substance abuse prevention programs). Although on a global scale such programs have met with mixed results, some of the better regarded ones have carefully considered source area geography and the sociodemographic contexts of those areas and have targeted efforts accordingly.

One of the more notable programs is found in Singapore, which has managed to rehabilitate and reintegrate in society a significant number of JI detainees. The core of Singapore's program is the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG). The RRG was formed as an expert group to provide religious counseling to JI detainees and family members. Among their key aims and activities are providing an "accurate" version of religious education, empowering detainees to guide their own families (away from extremist ideologies), helping former JI members adjust to living in Singaporean society, and enabling them to play a role in national security. A second pillar of Singapore's strategy is to involve the Muslim community in public awareness and education activities designed to counter the underlying ideology of Islamist terrorism. A key component of this effort is the Asatizah Recognition Scheme, which aims to enhance the public standing of religious teachers and provide oversight and guidance to ensure responsible religious education within communities. Another example can be found in a promising U.S.–Moroccan rehabilitation and reintegration program that targeted vulnerable youth between 15 and 24 years old in the cities of Tangier and Tetouan (which were mentioned earlier as terrorist source areas) living in particular local hotspots (such as marginalized schools, and poor and high-crime neighborhoods). Community participation and grassroots development initiatives were included in the program while seeking to address certain weak socioeconomic sectors such as education, employment, and health.¹⁵⁹

Conclusion

Applying a geographic approach can help situate terrorist social networks and their origins in actual space while adding granularity to the understanding and sociodemographic conditions that add resonance to extremist

messages and locate terrorist source areas, which in turn can help focus counterterrorism strategies and policies where they are most needed. This type of analysis can also provide a baseline against which present and emerging trends and patterns can be assessed. For instance, even a cursory look at the present geography of Islamist terrorism suggests that some key geographic patterns persist even as new ones develop. Since 2006, U.S. and coalition combat troops were withdrawn from Iraq, the Taliban have experienced a resurgence in Afghanistan, Al Qaeda has gained new life in Yemen, Syria has become the world's preeminent jihadist group. The aftermath of the Arab Awakening has brought the Sahel and parts of sub-Saharan Africa in from the periphery. And Nigeria has enabled Boko Haram to become a significant sub-regional movement, while Kenya and Tanzania have experienced a significant rise in attacks as well as radicalization within particular ethnic and geographical located communities. On the other hand, the Arab and Pakistani cores remain front and center (although there have been some shifting patterns within these spaces);¹⁶⁰ Central Asia (particularly Uzbekistan)¹⁶¹ and Southeast Asia have remained secondary cores while places like southern Thailand and Bangladesh remain troubled internally yet still on the edges in transnational terms. Continued application of a geographic perspective and techniques to the sociodemographic dimensions of terrorism is needed to identify and understand this evolving phenomenon and add precision to the assessment, development, and focus of strategies and policies.

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Combating State Sponsors of Terrorism

Daniel Byman

STATE SPONSORSHIP OF TERRORISM IS A COMPLEX PROBLEM that cannot easily be solved.¹ Despite diplomatic protests, economic sanctions, and even military pressure, Iran and Pakistan have supported numerous terrorist groups for decades. The Taliban persisted in its support of Al Qaeda until U.S.-backed forces toppled it from power. Such persistence in the face of pressure suggests that cutting the deadly connection between states and terrorist groups is difficult at best and impossible at worst. Yet the picture is not entirely bleak. Although there are no perfect solutions, careful policymakers can design better ones and avoid many common mistakes that can make the problem of state sponsorship worse.

What Instruments Are Available to Policymakers?

The United States and other powers usually employ several means to coerce state sponsors: political pressure, economic sanctions, and military force. As an alternative (or, more rarely, a complement), states may try to engage sponsors of terrorism. Each of these instruments has its flaws.

Engagement

States that are victims of terrorism may try to engage a sponsor, offering concessions in order to reduce the likelihood of further terrorism.

Regardless of the morality of “giving in to terrorists,” such engagement is often based on a ruthless strategic judgment: by conceding on what a government may deem as a minor issue, it can free itself from the scourge of terrorism. Engagement may prove particularly attractive if the victim regime has few alternatives with which to press the sponsoring state, is not the victim of state sponsorship itself, or does not see the terrorism as a serious threat.

For example, until 1986, France had a “sanctuary doctrine,” essentially giving terrorists considerable freedom to operate within French borders in the hopes of minimizing international terrorism on French soil. France allowed various Palestinian groups to operate as well as the Basque separatist group ETA. France also adjusted its foreign policy to win over state sponsors and their proxies. Some groups, such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), abided by the bargain and did not conduct attacks in France. Paris was also able to maintain relations with several state sponsors of terrorism.²

France suffered several problems with this approach. Most important, several groups did not keep their side of the bargain and began not only attacking in France, but attacking French targets (as opposed to U.S. or Middle Eastern ones). In addition, the accommodation with groups and sponsors created both diplomatic and political problems for Paris. Relations with victim countries, such as Spain, suffered considerably. Moreover, domestic audiences in France did not support appeasement. After 1986, France slowly began to move to suppress terrorist groups, recognizing that its efforts to engage were a failure.³

As the French experience suggests, engagement produces several problems. Naturally, the victim state and its allies are often furious at what they see as appeasement and use considerable diplomatic pressure to stop this. Moreover, appeasement is unpopular politically. Despite government efforts to downplay terrorism, European states repeatedly had to temporarily cut ties with Iran or otherwise take confrontational steps in response to public outrage over Iranian involvement in terrorism. Engagement, of course, also indicates that the government in question will indeed be blackmailed, thus encouraging additional threats or actual attacks. Not only can this encourage the particular state sponsor, but it also sends a message to all potential sponsors that using terrorists can pay off. Engagement also does not always provide protection from all terrorists. It is far more effective with a group like the PLO, which had little interest in attacking France, than it would be with an Algerian terrorist group that saw France as an enemy. Engagement is particularly difficult if the state sponsor is driven by ideology. U.S. attempts to engage the Taliban before the

1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania were often viewed as unwanted meddling rather than as a gentle alternative to confrontation.

Finally, engagement often requires painful policy choices that a state might not otherwise make. Partly in response to terrorism, Israel has engaged Syria over the Golan Heights, and India has engaged Pakistan over Kashmir. For both these governments, the fact of negotiations—to say nothing of the possibility of ceding land or accepting limits to sovereignty—was a painful concession.

Despite these many problems, engagement is at times necessary as long as it is part of a broader effort that involves coercive forms of pressure. Engagement, by itself, tends to make the problem of terrorism worse. However, coercion without any promise that the pressure will relent is not really coercion in the true sense: there must be an incentive to stop the support for terrorism, and the promise of engagement is thus often necessary.

Political Pressure

State efforts to halt support for terrorism almost always involve some form of political pressure. The U.S. state sponsor list's "name and shame" power is one means of getting state sponsors to abandon their support for terrorism. As Edmund Hull, the former acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism contended about regimes on the list, "Most of these governments are extremely uncomfortable with the stigma that comes attached to being accused of sponsoring terrorism, and they will over time seek ways to escape that stigma."⁴ Another common form of pressure is an official *démarche* meant to discourage a particular act in support of a terrorist group. At times, states may attempt to make a rival regime an international pariah, shunned by its neighbors and the world. After the attempted assassination of Egypt's President Mubarak in 1995, the United States worked with Sudan's neighbors and the United Nations (UN) to isolate Khartoum, which was linked to the attackers.

By itself, however, political pressure is a weak instrument. The "punishment" of a damaged reputation, the lack of diplomatic support on other issues, or even near-complete isolation usually pales before the broader strategic objectives, domestic concerns, or ideological agenda that led to the support of terrorism in the first place.

Isolation may also prove ineffective or difficult to establish because of the supporting state's importance for a host of other issues not related to terrorism. In the 1990s, the United States made relations with Syria a diplomatic priority because of its importance to an Arab-Israeli peace, leading to hundreds of high-level contacts during that decade that undermined

any efforts to isolate Damascus. Iran, a major player in a vital region, is similarly hard to shun, as many European powers and Japan see it as a major trade and investment opportunity and have felt that its critical geo-strategic position made engagement a better option. Indeed the U.S. decision to negotiate with Iran over its nuclear program despite Iran's support for terrorism illustrates how hard it is to completely shun a major regional power. Libya and Cuba, in contrast, were far easier to isolate, as they lack the strategic or economic importance of other sponsors.

Other states also have different threat perceptions, making it harder to present a unified front to a state sponsor. Iran and Hizbollah,⁵ for example, pose little threat today to the interests of most Western European states. As a result, U.S. calls for these countries to press Tehran often fall on deaf ears. In addition, many states favor dialogue and engagement over political pressure, believing this is the best way to moderate a hostile regime.

Despite these many limits, political isolation offers several advantages for policymakers over other options. Most important, it is low cost: it demands few sacrifices and carries few risks. In addition, political isolation is almost always part and parcel of a larger coercive campaign involving economic and military measures. Political pressure can be seen as a first step, or a reinforcing measure, for other forms of coercion. Former Secretary of State George Shultz, for example, argued, "Diplomacy could work these problems [those related to terrorism] most effectively when force—or the threat of force—was a credible part of the equation."⁶ Even if the use of massive military force is contemplated, political pressure must be used to signal the adversary as to what is desired. Moreover, obtaining multilateral support for these measures often makes them far more effective.

Economic Pressure

Economic pressure is another common means of trying to persuade sponsors to stop supporting terrorism. States can limit trade, withdraw investment, punish foreign companies, and otherwise use economic means to convince other countries not to support terrorism. Many of the penalties linked to the U.S. list of state sponsors, for example, involve restrictions such as bans on critical technologies and U.S. foreign assistance, including U.S. opposition to support at international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Perhaps wrongly, such pressure is often seen by the public and policymakers as a middle ground between an empty demarche and a full-scale invasion in terms of coercive power.

Economic pressure can be unilateral, multilateral, or, more rarely, comprehensive. Unilateral sanctions are the most common and are often initiated by the stronger, victim state. India has restricted trade with Pakistan, but few other countries have followed New Delhi's lead. The United States has long had a variety of sanctions against Iran, but it has had little success in persuading other countries to go along on the grounds of fighting terrorism.

At times, the United States has orchestrated multilateral sanctions, working with several allies to limit investment, the sale of arms, or other forms of economic punishment. After Iran took 66 Americans hostage in 1979, for example, most Western European countries joined the United States and imposed a range of economic penalties (most of which were far stronger on paper than in practice) on the clerical regime. More rarely, near-universal sanctions have been imposed. Examples of near-universal sanctions related to terrorism are the 1996 UN Security Council resolution that imposed limited punishments on Sudan because of its support for radical groups and the 1992–1993 sanctions placed on Libya for its non-cooperation with the Pan Am 103 bombing investigation.

In theory, governments may back down in the face of economic pressure, fearing that the loss of trade or other benefits would hurt tourism, hinder economic growth, prevent a military rearmament, or otherwise harm objectives not related to terrorism. This logic suggests that the economic costs to a regime (i.e., how much money it would lose) and its vulnerability (i.e., whether it can replace the lost trade or investment) would be key concerns.⁷ Such a decision is strictly a cost-benefit calculation: sanctions work when the strategic, ideological, or domestic rewards of backing a terrorist group are outweighed by the economic pain outsiders inflict.

Economic pressure may also affect elite or popular support for a regime, another theoretical potential point of leverage. A regime that fails to deliver economically might be voted out of power or lose the support of key interest groups keeping it in power. A travel ban, for example, undermines one of the prerequisites of wealth and power. Leaders and other elites are not given a place on the world stage and worse, for some, no spot on the Riviera. Some policymakers have even argued that sanctions will foster widespread popular unrest due to economic problems. The unrest, in turn, will either compel the regime to make concessions or possibly even lead to its collapse.

Sanctions, however, have several profound limits on their effectiveness. Studies of sanctions have determined that, in general, they succeeded only 17 percent of the time when imposed unilaterally and only slightly more when imposed multilaterally.⁸ What explains this dismal success rate? The

biggest problem for coercers is that it is difficult to use sanctions to increase the level of pain sufficiently to affect a hostile regime's decision making. Most state sponsors of terrorism are autocratic regimes and, as such, are less sensitive to the needs of their population than are democracies. The people may grumble, but the ruler can safely ignore them. Popular revolutions have never occurred in response to sanctions.⁹ Indeed, one widely noted effect of sanctions is that they backfire politically, and adversary leaders are able to use them to increase their hold on power. Sanctions, by cutting off trade and other channels outside the formal state apparatus, often increase a regime's ability to channel goods to its favorites and weaken potential rivals.

Sanctions' poor success rate is also explained in part because they are often imposed unilaterally, a less effective form of pressure. Gaining multilateral support, however, is often exceptionally difficult. The United States has long tried to convince European states and Japan to back its attempts to sanction Iran with little success, and it was the nuclear issue, not terrorism, that led to more success with sanctions. As with political isolation, other states may not forego the lost trade and investment opportunities, either because they do not share the same sense of threat as the victim state or because of the state sponsor's political and economic importance on issues not related to terrorism.¹⁰ At other times, they may genuinely believe that sanctions would only backfire and make the supporting regime more hostile or create a humanitarian disaster.

The result is often a weak compromise: multilateral sanctions whose breadth and bite are limited. The UN-mandated sanctions on Libya and Sudan, for example, were limited in scope. For Sudan, they focused primarily on restricting travel and reducing official contact with Khartoum. Libya, too, was isolated through sanctions, and it faced additional punishments such as having its assets frozen and restrictions on its purchases of oil and gas equipment.

Sanctions are particularly ineffective when a regime is motivated by ideological reasons. Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran famously scorned the importance of economics, declaring that the Islamic revolution was not about "the price of watermelons." The Taliban also cared little about the material well-being of ordinary Afghans in comparison to what they saw as their religious duty to support a range of radical groups, including Al Qaeda. Limits to economic growth is a price such regimes often willingly pay. Not until Khomeini died did economic growth become a priority for the regime in Tehran, and thus only then did it become sensitive to economic punishments and incentives regarding its support for terrorism.

Unsuccessful sanctions do not always simply fail: they can backfire and make a regime more intractable. In Iran, the clerical regime has used sanctions to persuade its people that the United States is hostile to Iran and seeks to destroy the regime there. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein's regime used the comprehensive sanctions to punish parts of the population that did not support his rule. Thus, sanctions can at times increase the supporting regime's popularity, weaken the opposition to it, and raise the overall level of hostility directed at the coercer.

The humanitarian impact of sanctions is another major drawback, both due to the inherent suffering they cause among innocents and because this suffering makes it harder to sustain them. Sanctions on Iraq, for example, were roundly condemned as doing little to shake the Baath regime while devastating innocent Iraqis. Death tolls of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians were widely reported, and while actual numbers remain disputed, it is clear that the toll of sanctions was considerable.¹¹ John and Karl Mueller lambasted the humanitarian effects of sanctions as "Sanctions of Mass Destruction."¹² Even if these critics overstated the humanitarian impact of sanctions or wrongly pinned responsibility for the suffering on the United States, the sanctions proved a political disaster for Washington. Much of the world saw the United States as deliberately supporting a policy that killed hundreds of thousands of children while doing nothing to harm Saddam's regime—a perception that tarnished America's image worldwide.

The Use of Force

When political and economic pressure does not lead to promising results, states often use their military forces to respond to terrorism. At the most extreme levels, this may involve invading another country and trying to change its government by force. A recent example is the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, where the United States worked with local Afghan allies to overthrow the ruling Taliban because of its support for Al Qaeda. (The United States also invaded Iraq in 2003, with Iraq's support for terrorism frequently stated as a reason for the attack—a rationale that before the war was strained and afterward seems ever weaker.¹³)

Far more common are limited uses of force to punish a regime for supporting terrorism and, ideally, deter it from backing future attacks. The United States bombed Libya in 1986 because of Libya's use of terrorism; in 1993, the United States struck Iraq in response to its attempted assassination of former President George H. W. Bush; and in 1998, the United States attacked Afghanistan and Sudan after Al Qaeda bombed U.S.

embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The United States, of course, is not the only country that uses force in response to terrorism. Iran repeatedly struck at Mojahedin-e-Khalq bases in Iraq, and Egypt sought to attack Sudan in 1995 after Sudanese-based Egyptian terrorists tried to kill President Mubarak in Ethiopia. Turkey used the threat of invasion to compel Syria to end its backing of the Kurdistan Workers' Party. India has long threatened military retaliation for Pakistan's support of Kashmiri groups. Most prominently, Israel has conducted military strikes at various points in its history against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia either at Palestinian targets directly or against regime targets in order to dissuade them from backing various Palestinian groups.

In these attacks, the coercing governments usually tried to focus on the terrorist group itself or on targets related to its activities—a problematic set of targets. Thus, in 1998, the United States bombed an Al Qaeda-linked camp in Afghanistan, while Israel's attack in Tunisia focused on the PLO headquarters there. The reasons for these limits are simple. Military strikes on terrorists based in a sympathetic country face many difficulties. In contrast to conventional militaries, terrorist groups themselves have few assets worth bombing. The "infrastructure" of supporting terrorism is often not destroyable through bombing: training camps are rudimentary, and the weapons systems involved are small and easy to replace. Terrorists themselves can easily disperse, making them difficult to strike—especially by air strikes or other "standoff" means. Even worse, terrorists often melt back into the civilian population, increasing the likelihood of significant civilian casualties. Many terrorists are also part of a broader insurgent movement. As such, it is relatively easy for the group to replace the cadre lost in a limited military strike with other dedicated recruits.

Military force in limited quantities seldom affects a regime's ability or willingness to support terrorism and often makes the problem worse.¹⁴ Strikes may harden the supporting regime's attitudes for several reasons. Capitulation in the aftermath of a military attack would be a grievous political blow to most governments. For the Taliban to have surrendered Osama bin Laden after the 1998 U.S. strikes on Afghanistan, for example, would demonstrate that the movement was abandoning the tradition of Pashtun hospitality for an honored guest. More generally, it would have demonstrated to a highly nationalistic people that the regime caved in the face of outside pressure.

Military strikes may even increase the popularity of a group, making it more attractive as a partner. For example, many Israeli attacks on Lebanon actually increased support for Hizbollah. The devastation caused by the Israeli attacks made the group's claim that it was only defending Lebanon from

an invader more credible. Military strikes often have little support abroad. Because the terrorist attacks often inflict relatively few casualties, military force is often viewed as a disproportionate response. In addition, the military strikes are often seen as destabilizing and thus jeopardizing a host of other strategic and economic interests. States and terrorists can also retaliate in response to military attacks, further decreasing international support for the attacks and often leading decision makers to avoid the use of force in the first place. When Israel attacked several targets in Lebanon, Hizbollah shelled Israeli settlements near the borders. The 1986 U.S. air strike on Libya led to the Pan Am 103 bombing as well as a host of smaller attacks.

Lessons for Coercers

States can be coerced into halting or reducing their support for terrorists, but the process is arduous and lengthy. Although there are no simple steps that can guarantee that a state will cease its support for terrorism, there are several guidelines that coercing states should recognize when seeking to halt the sponsorship of terrorism or, more realistically, to reduce it.

Understanding the Adversary

The first set of lessons involves understanding the nature of the adversary. Both support for terrorism and efforts to stop it are embedded issues, part of a regime's overall political trajectory. Revolutionary Iran and the Taliban's Afghanistan backed other radical groups as part of their overall efforts to spread their interpretation of Islam, a goal that was apparent in their domestic as well as foreign policy. However, if it is possible to reintegrate the state so it seeks the goodwill of the international community, counterterrorism pressure is more likely to succeed. It is no coincidence that Libya began talks regarding ending its support for terrorism at the same time that it proposed giving up its weapons of mass destruction programs—both stood as obstacles to the regime's reacceptance as part of a “normal” member of the international community.

Undifferentiated pressure almost always fails. The motivations of the supporting state, the type of support provided, and the dynamic of the group it supports all will affect whether coercion succeeds or fails. Nor can pressure be divorced from the broader strategic context. What worked to turn Libya away from terrorism in the 1990s would probably have failed in the 1970s, when the regime was more ideological and faced fewer problems at home.

Efforts to halt sponsorship must recognize, and ideally capitalize on, the reasons why sponsors support terrorism. For example, Pakistan's support for militants in Kashmir is largely (though not entirely) driven by a strategic ambition to gain what Islamabad believes to be its lost territory and to weaken India. During the Kargil crisis, the U.S. threat to realign strategically with New Delhi if Pakistan did not withdraw its forces thus had a tremendous impact. Economic sanctions that increased Pakistan's economic pain for much of the 1990s, in contrast, were far less effective. The domestic importance of the Kashmir issue, moreover, made it impossible for Musharraf to completely cut off support, placing limits on any progress.

Because ideological regimes are so difficult to coerce through the imposition of standard costs or persuade by offering common benefits, it is often necessary for the revolution to wane before these regimes agree to abandon terrorism. Over time, the fervor of all revolutions decreases. Charisma is "routinized" and the petty corruption and ambitions that characterize most politics eventually overcome the initial ardor for a cause. Revolutionary behavior also is punished by other states, which try to weaken, undermine, and contain those that threaten their power and position. Iran today is often described as "postrevolutionary," and Sudan is far less radical. All three have reduced their support for terrorism. This process, however, takes years if not decades.

In essence, the best policy when confronting an ideological regime may be a form of containment.¹⁵ That is to say, coercers should try to limit the spread of the revolutionary ideology by building up vulnerable states, both politically and militarily. Reducing their vulnerability to terrorism may require bolstering the victim states' intelligence services, helping reduce government corruption, targeting regime largesse to groups or areas most susceptible to the terrorists' appeal, or otherwise reducing opportunities for radicals to exploit.

A Way Out . . . Conditionally

One reason states often support terrorism is they have few if any other options for achieving their strategic ambitions. Demanding that a state end its support for terrorism thus involves far more than the state jettisoning a small group of unsavory thugs. In reality, the coercer is asking the supporting state to abandon a strategic objective or a vital domestic concern. If Pakistan abandoned Kashmiri militants, its rival India would emerge far stronger.

Providing state sponsors with a diplomatic way out thus may make the path to halting sponsorship easier. The promise of negotiations can offer

states another means of achieving their objective that does not require terrorism. This approach was the U.S. “answer” to the problem of Syrian terrorism: by forging a Syrian-Israeli peace, Syria would achieve its objectives at the bargaining table rather than through the use of terrorism.

Once again, however, this diplomatic “out” may easily backfire. If they are not careful, outside powers are rewarding the use of terrorism, suggesting to other states that its use pays off diplomatically. Moreover, the supporting state has an incentive to encourage terrorists to step up its activities when talks stall or when it deems the concessions insufficient, at times increasing the incidence of terrorism. Their motives are not linked to the benefits that the victim state or others can provide—often their own politics must change before progress can be made.

If a way out is offered, it must be balanced with strong coercive leverage, ensuring that the state in question does not see support for terrorism as beneficial on the whole. Engagement is at times necessary, but its costs can be considerable if it is unconditional. States must recognize not only that there is a penalty for continuing to support a terrorist group, but also that support for terrorism in general is foolish and can only backfire. The U.S. handling of Libya represents an almost perfect balance of coercion and engagement. Without the constant U.S.-led campaign, Qaddafi would have not come to the bargaining table. But without the promise of relief, he would never have made concessions.

Setting Priorities

Too often, the United States makes counterterrorism one goal of many, failing to set priorities. When pressing the Taliban in the 1990s, narcotics trafficking, human rights, and ending the civil war often took precedence over counterterrorism. Libya is again instructive. When beginning talks with Libya, in contrast, the U.S. agenda was appropriately limited. The United States did not press Qaddafi on human rights, elections, or other internal issues despite Libya’s dismal record on these scores. Washington initially even held back on Libya’s offer to end its weapons of mass destruction program, recognizing that terrorism should be the top priority.

Counterterrorism, of course, should not always be the top priority. For U.S. relations with North Korea, counterproliferation is a far more important goal, and any lingering concerns about Pyongyang’s involvement in terrorism should be subordinate to this objective. The key is not always to make counterterrorism a top priority, but rather to have priorities.

Even with regard to a state's consistent support for terrorism, establishing "red lines" and other priorities is essential. Mass casualty attacks, of course, are of far more concern than less deadly violence. A clear priority should be preventing a state's transfer of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (particularly any material for nuclear weapons or viral biological agents) to a terrorist group. Various WMD-armed states have so far refrained from such transfers, probably because they fear escalation from potential victims. Reinforcing such a concern among all potential proliferators is vital.

Enemies versus Terrorists

One obvious step is to reform the process of designating state sponsors of terrorism. Currently, U.S. definitions of terrorism conflate the difference between attacks on combatants and attacks on noncombatants rather than highlight it. Historically, the United States has often listed political enemies like Cuba and North Korea as terrorist regimes long after such support ceased. Unfortunately, by lumping them in the same category as Syria and Iran (and by excluding such egregious sponsors as Pakistan), any "name and shame" power of the list is reduced. In addition, the penalties that go with the sponsorship status remain considerable, making it hard to offer incentives for states that are moving in the right direction already. Politics now dominates policy. Those seeking change must recognize the political risks they run as they try to create more coherent definitions and categories. Continuing the current set of definitions reduces the potency of U.S. political measures such as the state sponsorship list and gives terrorist groups few incentives to avoid attacks on true noncombatants.

Ideally, there would be more than a simplistic black or white categorization—in other words, each year states would be placed somewhere along a spectrum between "sponsor" and "nonsponsor" as an indication of progress from one to the other. In addition, the sponsorship list would be focused on terrorism, not on broader U.S. concerns about a rogue regime.

Changing the Rules of the Game

The international community can make several changes in how it responds to state support that would make coercion more likely to succeed. One change is to end the fiction of deniability. Pakistan's links to Kashmiri militants, the Taliban's connections with Al Qaeda, Iran and Syria's ties to Hizbollah, and other relations between states and major terrorist groups were usually well known and often publicized by the supporting state

itself. Nevertheless, there is often a Talmudic debate over responsibility for a particular attack. For example, former National Security Advisor Samuel (“Sandy”) Berger noted about the Khobar attack: “We know it was done by the Saudi Hizbollah. We know that they were trained in Iran by Iranians. We know there was Iranian involvement. What has yet to be established is how substantial the Iranian involvement was.”¹⁶ Such hair-splitting gives a sponsor an incentive to offer sanctuary and logistical support to a group while avoiding a direct role in the final decision to strike a particular target. Instead, the burden should be on the accused state to demonstrate it has worked against the terrorist group and did not support its operations in any way, no matter how indirect.

Another fiction serving state sponsors is the respect given to sovereignty in cases where it is not exercised. Syria hid behind Lebanon, and Pakistan hid behind Afghanistan, using these ostensibly sovereign states for their own ends. Again, even though their dominance of these countries is (or was) widely recognized, they were able to exploit the narrow rules of the system to avoid responsibility for their actions.

A related change is for the international community to lower the bar on legitimate escalation on state sponsors. If states believe that only massive terrorist attacks will provoke international backing for a response, they have fewer reasons to withhold support. On the other hand, if the victim state believes that international support for a response would be forthcoming, it is far more likely to take advantage of its conventional military superiority.

The Effectiveness of Multilateralism

When possible, pressure should be multilateral. Multilateral policies have many problems: they are cumbersome, require concessions to allies, and at times lead to a lowest common denominator effect.¹⁷ These problems make it difficult to increase pressure on state sponsors. Despite these weaknesses, gaining the support of allies often means the difference between success and failure.

In large part, multilateral support for coercing a state sponsor limits sponsors’ options, both in terms of avoiding pressure and with regard to its other objectives. In short, they have no “plan of victory” that enables them to achieve their goals. U.S. unilateral efforts for years had failed to move Tripoli. UN sanctions and international isolation of Libya after the Lockerbie and Air France bombings, however, gave Qaddafi few options for gaining much needed foreign investment or for playing the leading role he sought to play in the Arab and broader world.

Reducing Passive Support

State sponsorship goes beyond actively arming and training terrorist groups. For some groups, particularly jihadist ones, state *inaction* is often vital. Governments that do not crack down on terrorist fundraising, recruitment, and transit are vital for anti-U.S. jihadists today. Reducing such passive support can transform the struggle against nonstate actors like Al Qaeda. If Al Qaeda were hounded wherever it tried to set up shop, it would be far harder for the organization to recruit, train, raise money, purchase weapons, protect its leadership, and otherwise survive and prosper. Ironically, the key to success against these nonstate actors lies in engaging or coercing their inadvertent hosts to move against them—and helping them gain the capacity to do so.

Imposing new or increasing existing costs is a time-honored tactic in diplomacy. In general, however, such threats must be part of a broader effort or else they cease to be meaningful. The United States, for example, did not make stopping support for jihadist causes a priority in the U.S.-Saudi relationship, giving Riyadh few additional incentives to crack down on this activity. Once this became a priority, simple embarrassment proved effective to lessen passive support. The spotlight held on Saudi Arabia after September 11 humiliated the Al Saud regime, making them scramble to at least appear cooperative.

Another key is to diminish popular support for the terrorist group, as many regimes hesitate to clamp down if the terrorists are seen as Robin Hoods. Efforts to play up the terrorist group's missteps and atrocities should be done at the popular level as well as at the governmental level. Propaganda campaigns are notoriously difficult, however, and U.S. efforts to demonize Al Qaeda have conspicuously failed. Working indirectly to diminish support may be essential. Given the deep unpopularity of the United States in many Muslim countries, U.S. efforts to diminish Al Qaeda's luster may only burnish it. It would be more effective if respected Muslim authorities would criticize the organization, as these voices have credibility with the key audiences.

Bolstering capacity so governments have the power to crush terrorists is a more straightforward task. This can range from technical assistance, such as helping improve databases or information systems that track terrorists and their activities to advice on intelligence reorganization and legal reform. Training can be particularly important, as many skills related to shutting down passive support—such as financial tracking—are relatively rare in government circles, particularly in the developing world. Money can also be provided to boost the size and skills of security and intelligence services.

Realistic Expectations

Coercing state sponsors is difficult even during the best of times, and success requires anticipating problems and recognizing the possibility of failure. Even modest progress can take years. Libya, for example, suffered unilateral sanctions, a direct military strike, and finally broad (if limited) UN-mandated sanctions before agreeing to end its support for terrorism—a process that took years. Power shifts that led to the purging of ideologues were necessary for Iran to reduce, and Sudan to end, their support for terrorism, and in Tehran's case the level of activity still remains high. In part, the significant amount of time necessary for success stems from the very nature of coercion. Most forms of coercive pressure will initially strengthen a regime, producing a “rally round the flag” effect.¹⁸ The punishment inflicted, in contrast, may take years to sink in.

Coercing states must also be wary of limited uses of force. Often, such gestures are politically necessary, fulfilling a desire to “do something.”¹⁹ Ironically, though military force is often depicted as a strong response, its use in a limited way may signal weakness. The 1993 U.S. strike on Iraq's intelligence headquarters after the attempted assassination of former President George H. W. Bush was roundly depicted as a “pinprick” that demonstrated only America's aversion to a strong response. Moreover, in terms of their counterterrorism effectiveness, limited strikes often make the supporting state more recalcitrant. The U.S. bombing of Libya in 1986, the 1998 attack on Afghanistan, and the various Israeli forays into Lebanon all made the target regime more enthusiastic in its backing of the terrorists. In addition, such attacks can lionize the terrorists among potential supporters, increasing their ability to raise money and recruit.

At times, states will have to settle for progress rather than for complete success. Cases such as Qaddafi's Libya are rare. Far more common are instances where outside pressure leads states to cut ties to particular groups or reduce their activities. Demanding an all-or-nothing standard, however, reduces supporting states' incentives to place limits on their proxies or to cut support to certain terrorist groups while retaining ties to others.

Thinking Ahead to Future Sponsors

It is easier to stop state support for terrorism before it starts than to halt backing after it begins. The back and forth between the coercing state and the state supporter can generate a cycle of hostility and make it difficult for the supporter to back down and lose face, even when the stakes involved are not high. Thus, one of the greatest challenges to the international

community is preventing the rise of new Taliban or other regimes that see supporting terrorism as ideologically vital. Similarly, states must be discouraged from following the path of Pakistan, which found strategic advantage by supporting terrorism.

Creating a strong norm against the sponsorship of terrorism both makes states less likely to engage in it in the first place and enables the victim state to respond more easily. Diplomatically, this requires engaging both allies and other states on these issues before the support for terrorism becomes well established. In addition, it demands that the United States and other countries offer would-be sponsors alternatives to terrorism, such as giving them options at the negotiating table.

Creating standards is vital with regard to the problem of passive sponsorship. Passive support today is a grey area in international relations, in part because the international community is reluctant to confront the difficulties of state capacity building and of demanding a higher standard for regime accountability. Passive sponsors have quite different motivations than do active sponsors, and the solutions to this problem differ in turn. Nevertheless, passive support remains vital for many terrorist groups, particularly Al Qaeda and its affiliates.

Such preventive diplomacy, however, is exceptionally difficult. Often, the bloodshed and carnage terrorists inflict must be manifest before any response occurs. In addition, states inevitably have different interests and different strategies for influencing would-be sponsors of terrorism, making it difficult to forge a common approach. The problem of passive sponsorship in particular will prove difficult to solve. Nevertheless, addressing these issues in advance offers one of the few long-term hopes for reducing the problem of state sponsorship.

Notes

1. This chapter draws on material from Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), extracts reproduced with permission.

2. Jeremy Shapiro, and Benedicte Suzan, "The French Experience of Counterterrorism," *Survival* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 69–73.

3. *Ibid.*, 70–74.

4. Edmund Hull, "Briefing upon the Release of the Report," *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000* (April 30, 2001). <http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2001/2571.htm>.

5. The "correct" English spelling of the group's Arabic name is Hizb'Allah or Hizbu'llah; however it is more usually spelled "Hizbollah," "Hizbullah," or "Hezbollah." In order to standardize across all chapters of this volume the editor has

chosen "Hizbollah" because that is the spelling employed in the URL designating the group's official homepage.

6. George P. Schultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), 650.

7. This concept emerged in the work of Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1977), 12–16.

8. Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffery J. Schott, and Barbara Oegg, "Using Sanctions to Fight Terrorism." Institute for International Economics, November 2001, electronic version.

9. Robert A. Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 90–136.

10. As Stuart Eizenstadt argues about Iran, for example: "Iran is simply too important a country in the region to isolate, and U.S. sanctions efforts such as ILSA (unilateral in nature and with no international backing) have been ineffective." Stuart E. Eizenstadt, "Do Economic Sanctions Work? Lessons from ILSA & Other U.S. Sanctions Regimes." Washington, DC: Atlantic Council (February 2004), 12.

11. Amatzia Baram's review argues that the total children's death toll from sanctions numbered well over 100,000, a far smaller but still staggering number of deaths. See Amatzia Baram, "The Effects of Iraqi Sanctions: Statistical Pitfalls and Responsibility," *Middle East Journal* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2000).

12. John Mueller and Karl Mueller, "Sanctions of Mass Destruction," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 3 (May/June 1999): 43–53.

13. The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, (the "9/11 Commission") found: "We have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaida cooperated on attacks against the United States." National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, "Overview of the Enemy," 5.

14. For an interesting assessment of this issue that draws primarily on Cold War-era data, see Bryan Brophy-Baermann and John A. C. Conybeare, "Retaliating against Terrorism: Rational Expectations and the Optimality of Rules versus Discretion," *American Journal of Political Science* 38 (1994): 196–210.

15. For an excellent review of containment's variations and difficulties, see Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Press, 2000).

16. As quoted in Elsa Walsh, "Louis Freeh's Last Case," *New Yorker*, May 14, 2001.

17. Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 162.

18. *Ibid.*, 34–35.

19. Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2001), 101.

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Terrorism Finance

Global Responses to the Terrorism Money Trail

Paul J. Smith

IN THE WEEKS FOLLOWING THE 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS in the United States, media reports focused on the ease with which the hijackers had lived in the United States while simultaneously plotting their imminent suicide attacks. Much attention was focused on the method of finance, and particularly the fact that the hijackers had moved more than \$325,000 into roughly 35 American bank accounts “without any of the banks’ issuing reports of suspicious activity to federal regulators.”¹ Several news articles highlighted the ease with which several of the hijackers had opened bank accounts in southern Florida. Another story noted that “the coordination [of the terrorist operation] was so thorough that each of the four hijacking teams had its own ATM card.”² Investigators would later reveal that two key hijackers, Mohamed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi, received wire transfers from an Al Qaeda operative based in the United Arab Emirates. Federal Bureau of Investigation officials said they believe that the transfers were sent by Mustafa Ahmed al-Hisawi, who had been identified as a “financial manager for Osama bin Laden.”³ Several years later, the National Commission on Terrorism Attacks upon the United States (the “9/11 Commission”) would finally conclude that “the 9/11 plotters spent somewhere between \$400,000 and \$500,000 to plan and conduct their attack.”⁴

In subsequent weeks and months following the 9/11 attacks, as congressional hearings began in earnest, there was little surprise that one issue

that captivated lawmakers' attention was the role and importance of money in sustaining the 9/11 operation. Representative Michael Oxley, Chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, perhaps captured this sentiment best when he delivered the following statement in October 2001:

The terrorists used American freedoms and American dollars against us. They executed their plans with access to our financial system, including credit cards, ATMs, local checking accounts, and wiring money overseas. The best way for our Committee to commemorate the victims' lives is to take every step possible to ensure that the gates to the financial services system in this country are locked to terrorists.⁵

Similar sentiments were expressed by other members of Congress. Senator Richard Shelby, a key expert on financial and money laundering matters, would note four years later that "money is the life blood of terrorism, and the Middle East is ground zero for much of the money raised and moved in support of terrorist activities."⁶

Similarly, the link between money and terrorism was highlighted by Juan Zarate, a (now former) senior U.S. Treasury Department official, in his testimony before the House Committee on Financial Services, when he stated that "the axiom now accepted around the world is that we must concentrate our national and collective power on breaking the financial ties that bind terrorist networks."⁷ Clearly, since the 9/11 attacks in the United States, attention has focused worldwide on the phenomenon of terrorist financing. Increasingly, the conventional wisdom posits that one of the keys to countering the terrorism threat is to target terrorist groups' financial underpinnings. Moreover, this emerging conventional wisdom is reflected in an unprecedented global effort by governments around the world—but especially the U.S. government—to monitor, track, and document all forms of financial transactions, in the event that terrorism support funds may be clandestinely pulsing through the international financial system. This is because, as Treasury Undersecretary David Cohen testified in April 2014, "Nearly every national security threat has an important financial component."⁸

However, subsequent investigations and hearings would later reveal that terrorism finance is a complex enterprise, involving various evolving methodologies. Testifying before the U.S. Senate, Dennis Lormel—an expert on money laundering—stated that terrorism finance should not be seen as a one-dimensional phenomenon, but rather as a complex, multi-dimensional enterprise involving both the funds as well as technical and administrative support.⁹ Moreover, another challenge for those who

subscribe to the emerging conventional wisdom that money provides the elemental underpinning of terrorism is the fact that terrorism, as a form of political violence, is extremely cheap. Past attacks in Indonesia, Spain, and the United Kingdom attest to the fact that the execution of a terrorist act often requires very little money at all. In fact, an individual terrorist could simply rely on his or her own funding by means of a personal salary, as was the case in the London subway bombing attacks. Nevertheless, this strategic shortcoming has not arrested or impeded a massive global effort to implement a financial surveillance system of unprecedented scale.

How Terrorists Acquire Money

Like most organizational activities, terrorism requires money to sustain itself. Despite their antisocial predisposition and destructive tendencies, terrorists must still pay their bills, particularly if they wish to avoid unwanted attention. Throughout history, terrorists have relied on multiple pathways to acquire money and thus finance their activities. Some of these have been legal (or semilegal), and others clearly illegal. What is clear, however, is that terrorists rely on overwhelmingly diverse means of acquiring money, which suggests that curtailing terrorism from a financial dimension is probably a much more daunting challenge than many policy-makers may be willing to admit.

Fundraising and Solicitation

Similar to a parent-teacher organization or a local civic club, terrorist groups may turn to classic fundraising techniques to acquire working capital. The Sri Lankan-based Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was particularly notorious for conducting fundraising activities in Western countries among diaspora Tamil communities. These activities ranged from pledge drives, contribution cans located next to cash registers in convenience stores, and direct door-to-door solicitation. In Canada, these fundraising activities were once estimated to raise between \$7 million to \$22 million a year in direct and indirect support for the Tamil guerrillas who had been seeking an independent homeland in Sri Lanka.¹⁰

Like the LTTE, the Lebanese-based group Hizbollah¹¹ also relies on Lebanese expatriates (and others) who send money back home. In Charlotte, North Carolina, Hizbollah was known for holding “regular parlor meetings” in members’ homes, where Hizbollah propaganda videos were shown, followed by the passing around of a collection basket.¹² Similar patterns can be seen with numerous other terrorist groups.

Charities and Wealthy Individuals

Charities may also act as a significant source of funding for terrorist organizations. The role of charities and financial contributions by individuals is particularly important for Middle Eastern terrorist groups, such as Al Qaeda and its progeny. According to one terrorism analyst, “[D]angerous Middle Eastern terrorists like al Qaeda, Hizbollah and Hamas traditionally have relied largely on donations from wealthy Arab contributors, sometimes funneled through Islamic charities.”¹³ According to the 9/11 Commission Report, Al Qaeda collected money from charities in two key ways, first by relying on “al Qaeda sympathizers in specific foreign branch offices of large, international charities,”¹⁴ and by controlling certain charities, such as the al Wafa organization. The 9/11 Commission found that “charities were a source of money and also provided significant cover, which enabled operatives to travel undetected under the guise of working for a humanitarian organization.”¹⁵

One key problem for officials investigating charities is that legitimate humanitarian money is often mixed with money that is either earmarked for terrorism or is siphoned off by terrorist organizations. For example, it was widely known that the LTTE siphoned “off donations to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), aid organizations and other benevolent entities that finance Tamil social service and development programs in Sri Lanka.”¹⁶ Another case of fund siphoning was highlighted when the U.S. Internal Revenue Service compelled the executive director of Chicago-based Benevolence International Foundation, Inc. to plead guilty to a racketeering conspiracy for his role in diverting funds “in order to provide financial assistance to persons engaged in violent activities overseas,” including fighters based in Chechnya and Bosnia.¹⁷ In some other cases, funds are simply delivered wholesale (but surreptitiously) to the terrorism-related organizations. In April 2014, for example, Canadian authorities raided a Muslim charity accused of sending roughly \$15 million directly to Palestinian-based Hamas.¹⁸

In addition to charities, terrorist organizations may benefit from direct donations from wealthy individuals who share sympathies with the terrorists’ political objectives. According to the 9/11 Commission’s final report, Al Qaeda derived the bulk of its financing not from Osama bin Laden’s purported vast wealth, but rather from his reliance on a key network of wealthy donors. The report noted that “Al Qaeda appears to have relied on a core group of financial facilitators who raised money from a variety of donors and other fundraisers, primarily in the Gulf countries and particularly in Saudi Arabia.”¹⁹ The phenomenon of individual contributions to

terrorist organizations has been a particular challenge for Saudi Arabia, which was singled out in 2009 by then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton who described the kingdom as the “most significant source” of funding for Sunni terrorist organizations.²⁰ Although the Saudi Arabian government has cracked down on many charities, it has had less success with controlling individuals who have a penchant for financing violent extremism. According to Anthony Cordesman, individuals in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern and Islamic countries will continue to provide financial support for extremist groups because “regional governments can only do so much to limit such funding.”²¹ He cites a report from the U.S. investment firm Merrill Lynch suggesting that this may become an even greater problem in the future:

Merrill Lynch estimates that the capital controlled by wealthy individuals in the Middle East rose by 29 percent during 2003–2004, to a level of approximately \$1 trillion. . . . [This raises] serious questions about how much governments can do. Much of this capital is in private accounts outside the region, terrorist operations are only moderately expensive, and Merrill Lynch projects a further 9 percent annual rise in such holdings from 2004 to 2009.²²

Legitimate Businesses

Some terrorist organizations run their own business enterprises. Al Qaeda, under Osama Bin Laden’s leadership, was famous for its entrepreneurial tendencies. Al Qaeda reportedly owned a fishing business in Mombassa, Kenya, various trading companies in Sudan, and a ceramic manufacturing company in Yemen.²³ Nevertheless, despite Al Qaeda’s apparent knack for capitalist enterprise, it is not clear that these businesses substantially improved or sustained Al Qaeda’s finances. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, Al Qaeda’s business pursuits had only a marginal impact on the organization’s finances; according to Central Intelligence Agency estimates, most of the \$30 million that Al Qaeda needed to sustain itself every year was raised almost entirely through donations.²⁴

Other terrorist organizations running their own businesses have arguably had greater success, although not necessarily on the financial front. For example, one of the key members of the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) ran a company, Infocus Technology, that was able to facilitate the granting of an immigration visa into the United States for Zacarias Moussaoui, the alleged 20th 9/11 hijacker.²⁵ Another JI-affiliated company,

Green Laboratory Medicine—whose director was Yazid Sufaat, a JI member—was used as a front to purchase 21 tons of ammonium nitrate for use in terrorist attacks in Singapore.²⁶ The trading company Konsojaya, established in 1994, “ostensibly exported Malaysian palm oil to Afghanistan and imported honey from Sudan and Yemen.”²⁷ But the company played a more sinister role, particularly as a “front for moving money and purchasing chemicals and equipment for bomb-making” for the 9/11-prototype plot known as Oplan Bojinka, which sought to destroy 11 U.S. airliners as they crossed the Pacific Ocean (among other objectives).²⁸

Illicit Activities: Narcotics

In addition to legal or semilegal activities, terrorist groups may also resort to criminal activity as a means of raising funds. On March 1, 2006, for example, the United States Court for the District of Columbia issued a superseding indictment against more than 40 individuals, primarily Colombian nationals, for violating various federal laws regarding narcotics trafficking and conspiracy. According to the indictment, “it was a part and an object of the conspiracy that All Defendants, and others known and unknown to the Grand Jury, would and did import into the United States . . . five kilograms and more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of cocaine.”²⁹ Many of the individuals named in the indictment were members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia or FARC), which was created in 1964 “as a left wing guerilla group dedicated to the violent overthrow of the Government of Colombia.”³⁰

The indictment further stated that “FARC has evolved into the world’s largest supplier of cocaine and cocaine paste.”³¹ Moreover, the group was accused of being directly responsible for half of the world’s supply of cocaine and “more than approximately 60% of the cocaine sent to the United States.”³² FARC has been designated by the U.S. secretary of state as a foreign terrorist organization. Initially, FARC’s involvement in cocaine trafficking related to “taxes” that it imposed on non-FARC drug traffickers operating within the territory it controlled; however, beginning in the 1990s, FARC took on a more direct role in the cocaine trade by transforming itself “into a broker between the cocaine paste producing campesinos and the cocaine transportation organizations that distributed the cocaine to the United States and elsewhere.”³³ Having achieved a monopoly in cocaine paste purchases, FARC was then able to set the price of cocaine paste purchased from the campesinos.³⁴ The case of FARC and Colombian drug trafficking provides a direct example of a terrorist organization

turning to narcotics to raise funds; narcotics has provided the organization with a sizable funding source of convenience and consistency.

Other examples linking terrorists to the narcotics trade also exist around the world. In Turkey, the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (or PKK) has long been associated with the drug trade. Since 1985, over 300 PKK members have been arrested for drug offenses, and over half of these arrests occurred in Germany. The PKK link to narcotics is natural, given "Turkey's position as a pivotal transit route for Southwest Asian opiates flowing into Europe."³⁵ In Central Asia, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other groups in that region have also been strongly linked to the drug trade. According to Michael Sheehan, former U.S. State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism, "Terrorist groups in Central Asia have been profiting from the drug smuggling and using it to finance their purchase of weapons and other activities."³⁶ In Thailand, the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) has accused various narcotics syndicates of "helping to finance the insurgency in the southern border provinces"³⁷ although some other officials have disputed this claim. Specifically, the ONCB alleged that "of the 17 drug gangs known to be operating in the southern provinces along the Thai–Malay border, two of the largest international syndicates were thought to be assisting southern militants and vice versa."³⁸

In Europe, drug trafficking has been strongly linked to terrorist organizations. The terrorists involved in the Madrid train attack were part of a major drug smuggling syndicate linking Morocco, Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands.³⁹ There is evidence that proceeds from illegal drug sales directly funded the terrorist operations. According to one report published in *U.S. News & World Report*, "Moroccan terrorists used drug sales to fund not only the 2004 Madrid attack but also the 2003 attacks in Casablanca, killing 45, and attempted bombings of U.S. and British ships in Gibraltar in 2002."⁴⁰ Another study published by *Jane's Intelligence Review* also supports this claim: "Trading in hashish and Ecstasy paid for cars, safe houses and explosives."⁴¹ Moreover, many of the terrorist operatives involved in the Madrid operation also had records of involvement with illicit drugs.⁴²

Other Criminal Activities

Terrorist organizations have also turned to other forms of crime to raise money, including credit card fraud, kidnapping, and extortion. Historically, terrorism has often been associated with crime, and thus this phenomenon is not new. In Germany, for instance, the now defunct Red Army Faction raised money "the old fashioned way" by robbing banks.⁴³ Contemporary terrorists have shown similar traits in terms of their criminal

ingenuity and scope. In one case, cigarette smuggling was the preferred means of accessing capital. In March 2006, prosecutors in the United States unsealed an indictment charging 19 people (including U.S. and Canadian citizens) with smuggling cigarettes and other contraband (including counterfeit Viagra). A portion of the profits were diverted to the designated terrorist organization Hizbollah.⁴⁴ Typically, a cigarette smuggling enterprise simply involves purchasing cigarettes in states where the tax is low (such as North Carolina), then transporting them on an interstate freeway north to states that impose a much higher tax. The cigarettes are then sold on the black market without having any tax imposed. With such huge profits, some police argue that “cigarette trafficking now has begun to rival drug trafficking as a funding choice for terrorist groups.”⁴⁵

In another case, Mohammad Youssef Hammoud, a citizen of Lebanon, entered the United States with fraudulent documents in 1992. After being detained by U.S. immigration authorities, Hammoud applied for asylum and during this period he moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, where he had brothers and cousins. Ultimately, Hammoud gained U.S. resident alien status by marrying a U.S. citizen. Sometime in the mid-1990s, Hammoud, his wife, and one brother became involved in a cigarette smuggling operation that involved smuggling cigarettes from North Carolina (a state that imposed a minimal tax of .50 cents on cigarette packs) to Michigan (which imposed a tax of \$7.50 per carton). Taxes were not paid in Michigan, and consequently that state lost approximately \$3 million in potential tax revenues. More importantly, some portion of these illicit profits were funneled to Hizbollah. Moreover, the court determined that Hammoud and his coconspirators had engaged in sophisticated money laundering schemes by setting up fictitious entities and shell corporations which could then be used to launder the proceeds of the cigarette smuggling. Eventually, Hammoud and his brother were convicted of numerous crimes, including cigarette smuggling, racketeering, and money laundering, and Hammoud was eventually sentenced to 155 years in prison.⁴⁶

Apart from more sophisticated criminal schemes, many contemporary terrorists are actively involved in petty crimes, with the purpose of raising funds. In some cases, the leadership of the organization, such as JI or its splinter groups, will actively encourage the practice. Within certain militant Islamist movements in Southeast Asia, there exists a tradition known as *fa'i*—using money from crime to support religious causes.⁴⁷ Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, one of the cofounders of JI, reportedly told a student who had asked about the appropriateness of conducting computer hacking and online fraud, “You can take their blood, then why not take their property?”⁴⁸ In other cases, criminal activity is turned to out of necessity. In December

1999, a U.S. Customs Agent intercepted Ahmed Ressam as he was attempting to enter the United States for the purposes of bombing the Los Angeles International Airport. Ressam had built his life as a terrorist not by living on lavish support from Al Qaeda or any other organization, but rather by engaging in petty crime and welfare fraud in Canada. Among other things, he sold fake passports, social security numbers, and driver's licenses. He was also arrested four times and convicted twice. During the period from 1994 to 1999, Ahmed Ressam committed crimes ranging from "shoplifting, pickpocketing, purse snatching and stealing tourists' suitcases."⁴⁹ In 1998, he was convicted of stealing laptop computers from parked cars, and served a two-week sentence.⁵⁰ What the Ressam case reveals is the fact that many contemporary terrorists engage in criminal activities—in a manner similar to classic organized crime syndicates—to raise money, support themselves, or purchase key weapons or other materials that are needed to conduct terrorist attacks.⁵¹

Kidnapping provides yet another criminal pathway to substantial capital inflows for terrorists.⁵² Kidnapping has emerged as a major internal security threat in many developing countries around the world, although in most cases it is an outgrowth of criminal (not terrorist) activities. However, there are examples where crime and terrorism converge. In Colombia, for instance, local criminals kidnap individuals and after receiving a ransom, simply transfer the hostage to FARC, which then extorts additional money from families and businesses, and thus earns substantial profits for itself.⁵³ In Southeast Asia, one of the most brazen kidnapping events occurred on April 23, 2000, when operatives from the Philippine-based Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) kidnapped more than 21 tourists from Malaysia, Germany, South Africa, Lebanon, Finland, and the Philippines at the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan.⁵⁴ With their hostages in tow, the ASG operatives raced back into Philippines waters (via their two speedboats) and ultimately reached their jungle hideouts. Subsequently, they made exorbitant financial demands for the release of the hostages, including demands of US\$1 million per hostage. Eventually, the drama became more bizarre when Libya offered to pay \$25 million in exchange for most of the hostages. Such kidnappings are not rare in the Philippines, and have been repeated often since 2000. In many cases, a complex nexus exists between criminal gangs and terrorist groups, often to the point of tactical cooperation.⁵⁵

Crime and terrorism have traditionally been viewed as distinct activities. Organized crime gangs typically engage in crime so as to gain illicit profits; terrorists engage in "criminal acts"—murder, destruction of property, and so on—so as to bring about some sort of political change. The traditional view has been that these are distinct phenomena. However, the

case of Ahmed Ressam and other contemporary examples suggest that crime and terrorism may be more related than once assumed, particularly in an era of globalization and declining (direct) state support for terrorism. One analyst has argued that “criminal and terrorist groups regularly engage in strategic alliances to provide goods or services”⁵⁶ and moreover, “terrorist and criminal groups converge in territory inadequately controlled by state forces . . . to advance mutual interests and areas of potential cooperation.”⁵⁷ Traditionally, it was assumed that criminal organizations eschewed terrorists, not because of any moral qualms, but because “it was bad for business; cooperation with political radicals would turn unwanted attention onto [the criminal] group.”⁵⁸ Now that there is evidence to the contrary, the implications are that both terrorist and criminal groups may become more independent of state control. Thus, pressuring states to sever all financial support to terrorists may have been an effective strategy in the past, but the fact remains that many terrorist organizations have alternative ways in which to assure their financial security. The increasing convergence between crime and terrorism suggests that terrorist groups may become more private—in other words, operate to a great extent outside the constraints and controls that could have been imposed by governments and the international system.

How Terrorists Transfer or Store Their Money

On February 18, 2004, U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) agents raided the Ashland, Oregon, offices of Al Haramain Islamic Foundation, a Saudi Arabian charity linked to Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. IRS agents acted on suspicion that Al Haramain officials had filed false tax returns by omitting certain income and by mischaracterizing how their money was being spent.⁵⁹ Moreover, the group was accused of laundering \$150,000 in donations to help Al Qaeda fighters in Chechnya.⁶⁰ The Oregon raids revealed a key element of the U.S. strategy against terrorist financing—cracking down on charities and other organizations that funnel money to terrorist groups. In the case of Al Haramain, U.S. officials had linked this organization to a range of terrorist attacks, including the 1998 U.S. embassy attacks in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the Bali nightclub bombings in October 2002.

However, what is also significant about Al Haramain was the fact that the organization allegedly not only provided a source for funding but also provided a global conduit through which funds could be discreetly disbursed across the world. In one case, the charity was accused of wiring a \$1 million payment in 1999 to militant fighters in Chechnya.⁶¹ For this

and other reasons, the group was forced to shut its offices in various former Soviet Union states, as well as Somalia and Bosnia, particularly after U.S. officials “asserted those offices used charitable donations to finance terrorist activities.”⁶² Officials describe the practice of diverting legitimate funds to terrorism activities as “reverse money laundering.” Reverse money laundering—unlike classic money laundering—involves the transmitting of clean money into associations or activities that are illegal in nature. An alternative definition describes reverse money laundering as an activity “where illicit funds are covertly transferred to individuals to finance terrorist operations.”⁶³ Contributing money to a charity that promotes terrorism would thus be considered money laundering. This is important for Al Qaeda and its progeny since, according to a report by a Council on Foreign Relations task force, “Al-Qaeda moves its funds through the global financial system, the Islamic banking system, and the underground hawala system, among other money transfer mechanisms. It uses its global network of businesses and charities as a cover for moving funds.”⁶⁴ A similar case of “charity abuse” occurred in the southern Philippines, where Mohammed Jamal Khalifa—Osama bin Laden’s brother-in-law—had set up local branches of Islamic charities, such as the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO).⁶⁵ According to one analyst, “The IIRO branch [in the Philippines] was misused without its knowledge for the routing of funds to the ASG and Al-Qaeda cells located throughout the country and region.”⁶⁶

Charities may use formal banking sectors, or if they face pressure, they may revert to using informal value transfer systems (IVTS), which provide another pathway for terrorists to transfer funds globally (particularly as formal transfer systems receive increased government scrutiny and surveillance). Such systems include the *hawala* system, the peso-exchange system, and the *fei-chien* system, among others. These systems work by transferring value (as opposed to physical or electronic currency) throughout the world. For example, an IVTS dealer in country X contacts another dealer in country Y and instructs him to deduct a certain amount (the amount of the money to be transferred). This obviously creates a debt for the dealer in country Y; such debts are reconciled either by opposite financial flows, or through other means (such as false invoicing). At some point in the future, the books must be reconciled between the two dealers. The problem for government regulators is that global IVTS have been developed, not for terrorism financing, but rather to address the banking needs of millions of poor—often migrant—workers throughout the world. In many parts of the world, these IVTS “represent the only financial system available.”⁶⁷ According to Walter Perkel, an estimated \$100 billion to \$300 billion pass through the IVTS every year. The problem is that such

systems, while originally created for purposes unrelated to terrorism, can be exploited by transnational terrorist organizations.

Another way to transmit money is to use the services of an unlicensed or unregistered money transmitter. Indeed, as scrutiny of the formal banking sectors grows every year, terrorist organizations, their supporters, or members of classic criminal organizations may seek to transmit funds globally via informal channels, such as through unregistered money transmission businesses. As with the IVTS, unlicensed money transmitters often service immigrant—and often illegal immigrant—communities. In other words, they target groups who cannot afford traditional fees charged by banks and who wish to avoid government scrutiny for a variety of reasons (tax evasion, illegal immigrant status, etc.). Nevertheless, these money transmitting businesses are viewed by the U.S. government, and increasingly other governments, as a potential problem in terms of money laundering. According to one U.S. Homeland Security Department official, “These unlicensed [money service] businesses operate outside of the traditional banking system and governmental oversight, and have been long recognized by law enforcement as vulnerable for exploitation by terrorists and other criminals.”⁶⁸ Recent legal changes, such as 18 U.S.C. 1960, Prohibition of Unlicensed Money Transmitting Business, enacted through the USA PATRIOT Act, are providing U.S. investigators with greater authority to investigate such businesses.⁶⁹

A more fundamental means of transmitting money across international borders is to simply have someone smuggle it in cash. In Southeast Asia, Jemaah Islamiyah relied on small-scale couriers who arrive with bags of cash. Personal couriers, often Indonesian migrants working in Malaysia who were not actual members of JI, helped transfer more than \$15,000 in cash that was used in the first Bali bombing of October 2002.⁷⁰ Indonesian police reported that JI regularly used cash couriers to smuggle cash into Indonesia to fund its operations.⁷¹ In the United States, bulk cash smuggling is traditionally associated with narcotics trafficking. As the United States has implemented stricter banking standards—resulting from requirements of the Bank Secrecy Act of 1970—narcotics traffickers have found it more difficult to achieve the initial “placement” stage (depositing cash; transforming cash into an electronic or bankable form) of money laundering. As a result, a vibrant cash smuggling industry has grown, particularly along the U.S.-Mexican border. According to a U.S. Treasury Department official, “Cash associated with drugs typically flows out of the U.S. across the southwest border into Mexico, retracing the route that the drugs took entering the United States. Drugs and illicit proceeds also cross our northern and other borders.”⁷²

Finally, a new and emerging form of cross-border cash or value transfer is facilitated by the Internet, particularly the rise of “e-cash,” “e-gold” or Bitcoin (and similar) transactions. According to a U.S. Department of Homeland Security official, “Internet payment services such as PayPal, Bid-Pay, e-gold and e-Dinar represent new methods to transfer funds globally. For example in 2004, PayPal executed 339.9 million payments totaling \$18.9 billion in value.”⁷³ E-cash is ideal for clandestine transmission of money across borders, particularly given the anonymity that it provides. As David Cohen recently testified: “Virtual currency, as we all know, can offer a sort of anonymity that has been particularly useful for criminals.”⁷⁴

It is particularly useful to achieve the “layering” stage of money laundering (sending money to a number of accounts in different jurisdictions so as to create layers between the money and its source). Many of these transactions can be conducted without the need for identifying information of the sender or receiver. And, according to a U.S. government official, “some Internet payment conveyances keep few or no records. Others with substantial record keeping may reside safely beyond the reach of U.S. law enforcement.”⁷⁵ U.S. officials fear that these new and emerging technologies provide a significant window through which illicit cash can be transmitted across multiple jurisdictions, and moreover, that these technologies and methods “are not addressed by the currency and monetary instrument reporting requirements as presently structured.”⁷⁶

Domestic and International Legal Regimes against Terrorism Finance

As global attention focuses on terrorism and terrorism financing, governments around the world have pushed for new regulations—both international and domestic—to address the perceived legal gaps that terrorists may exploit. Indeed, multiple jurisdictions around the world—often under U.S. guidance or pressure—are transforming their financial systems in a manner as to make them inhospitable to terrorism financing. According to Gerald Feierstein of the U.S. State Department, “A number of countries have either adopted new legislation to shut down terrorist financing, or are in the process or doing so.”⁷⁷ The U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of Technical Assistance (OTA), which provides policy advice and technical assistance (regarding management of public finances) to governments seeking such assistance, has expanded its financial enforcement program substantially. Today, the OTA has advisors in 43 countries, including the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union.⁷⁸

Notwithstanding efforts to suppress terrorism financing after the 9/11 attacks, perhaps the most significant international measure against

terrorism financing was introduced in 1999, when the United Nations adopted the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which entered into force on April 10, 2002. By June 2005, the convention had been signed by 132 countries, and 117 were full parties to the agreement.⁷⁹ The convention created a number of obligations for states, such as the need to (1) create domestic laws that criminalize the financing of terrorist acts; (2) provide legal and law enforcement to other party states; and (3) require financial institutions to implement reporting and diligence requirements.⁸⁰

The 1999 Convention was a powerful step within the international community to stem terrorism financing. But the impact of 9/11 made the convention even more potent, particularly with the passage of UN Resolution 1373. Passed only weeks after the 9/11 attacks, Resolution 1373

criminalized all activities falling within the ambit of terrorist financing [and] obliged states to freeze all funds or financial assets of persons and entities that are directly or indirectly used to commit terrorist acts or that are owned and controlled by persons engaged in, or associated with, terrorism [and] obliged states to prevent their nationals (including private financial institutions) from making such funds available, in effect imposing strict client detection measures, STR procedures, and subordination to other intergovernmental institutions in order to receive the names of designated terrorist organizations or individuals; [and] imposed substantive and procedural criminal law measures at the domestic level, including an obligation to cooperate in the acquisition of evidence for criminal proceedings.⁸¹

To implement the measures of Resolution 1373, the UN Security Council established a subsidiary organ commonly known as the Counter-Terrorism Committee. "Member states were obliged to report to the committee, within 90 days, on the steps they had taken to implement the resolution."⁸²

In addition to international laws, rules, or conventions, many countries have their own domestic legal regimes that focus on terrorism financing. The United States, for instance, has a number of laws that directly target terrorist financing. Under the International Emergency Powers Act,⁸³ passed in 1977, as well as other statutes, the U.S. government has established "sanctions programs that prohibit named foreign terrorists, foreign drug kingpins, and their fronts and operatives from using their assets within U.S. jurisdiction or engaging in business or other financial activities with U.S. persons, including companies or individuals."⁸⁴ Another law passed in 1996, the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA), gives the secretary of state authority to designate any group as a threat to U.S. national security, and thus makes it a crime for any person in the United States to provide

funds or any material support to such a group.⁸⁵ In addition, the AEDPA prevents U.S. persons from “engaging in transactions with countries that support terrorism” and requires that financial institutions freeze financial accounts belonging to international terrorist organizations.⁸⁶

Another way that governments around the world are cracking down on terrorism financing is to target money laundering. Increasingly, countries are enacting severe regulations against money laundering, terrorism finance, and other financial crimes. According to E. Anthony Wayne, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs,

Seventeen countries promulgated or updated anti-money laundering and terrorist financing laws in 2005. The number of jurisdictions that have criminalized money laundering, to include other crimes resulting in money laundering beyond narcotics, increased from 163 in 2004 to 172 in 2005. Ten more countries criminalized terrorist financing.⁸⁷

One organization that is at the forefront of anti-money laundering efforts is the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernmental body that standardizes international policies to counter money laundering. Recently, it has emphasized countering terrorism financing (including recent initiatives to counter cross-border currency smuggling) as part of its overall mandate to address international money laundering.⁸⁸

The United States has also retargeted its anti-money laundering regime toward terrorism financing. The foundation of the U.S. money laundering regime is the Bank Secrecy Act, passed in 1970, which seeks to “prevent financial institutions from being used as intermediaries for the transfer or deposit of money derived from criminal activity and to provide a paper trail for law enforcement agencies in their investigations of possible money laundering.”⁸⁹ The Bank Secrecy Act requires that banks generate certain reports, such as Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs), on customers who exhibit unusual behavior (in the context of a financial transaction) or who satisfy certain financial thresholds.

Recently, data from SARs has been used in terrorism investigations or prosecutions. In one case, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, relying on data provided by SARs, began a bank and mail/wire fraud investigation “involving a purported charity raising money for needy people in a Middle Eastern country.”⁹⁰ Data from SARs has also been used in prosecuting operators of unlicensed money transmitting businesses. In one case, a defendant was prosecuted for operating a multimillion-dollar money transfer business that, at its peak, “was transferring more than half a million dollars to a Middle Eastern country, out of the defendant’s store.”⁹¹ The scope of

the Bank Secrecy Act was greatly expanded with passage of Title 3 of the USA PATRIOT Act, otherwise known as the International Money Laundering Abatement and Anti-Terrorist Financing Act of 2001. Title 3 specifically targets money laundering, considered a \$500 billion per year transnational crime, and greatly expands the scope of the Bank Secrecy Act.

As noted earlier, money laundering consists of three critical steps: placement, layering, and integration. The layering stage is the primary means through which money is transferred internationally; the ability to conduct layering transactions in a sophisticated and clandestine manner is a skill that is highly valued by transnational crime and terrorist organizations. However, it is also prohibited by U.S. law. For instance, 18 U.S.C. § 1956(a)(2) addresses international financial crime offenses and specifically makes it a crime to

transport, transmit, or transfer [or attempt the same] a monetary instrument or funds knowing that the instrument or funds involve the proceeds of any unlawful activity (i) with the intent to promote the carrying on of specified unlawful activity, (ii) knowing that such transportation, transmission or transfer is designed to conceal or disguise the nature, location, source, ownership or control of proceeds of specified unlawful activity, or (iii) knowing that such transportation, transmission or transfer is designed to avoid a federal or state transaction reporting requirement.⁹²

For prosecutors, the significant utility of the federal money laundering statutes is that they can be applied to virtually any crime that involves any financial transaction, such as financial support for international terrorism. The predicate “specified unlawful activities” that invoke the money laundering statutes have been expanded to include virtually all federal white-collar crimes. As a result, “the money laundering statutes reach virtually any type of illicit proceeds which one might obtain.”⁹³ It is thus not surprising that the United States is encouraging other countries to adopt a similar regime. In 2006, U.S. officials visited Bangladesh for the purpose of encouraging that country to beef up its anti-money laundering surveillance and prosecution system.⁹⁴ As the U.S. example demonstrates, it provides a critical tool to address terrorism financing.

Conclusion: Limitations to Focusing on Terrorism Finance

During the past decade, and particularly since 1999, regulations and laws have been implemented throughout the world, focused primarily at terrorism financing. Even governments that once resisted global pressure to either limit terrorist financing or deter money laundering in their jurisdictions are

now conforming to this trend, although sometimes reluctantly. By 2005, according to one U.S. official, the United States and other countries had “frozen more than \$150 million . . . of ‘terrorist assets’ in the global anti-terrorism fight since 2001.”⁹⁵ With such seizures in mind, it could easily be asserted that global surveillance of monetary transactions—particularly of the illicit variety—is at an all-time high. This would suggest that terrorists are being squeezed of funds, and thus the “financial oxygen” that sustains terrorist activity is nearly depleted.

Unfortunately, however, the reality is more complicated. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, terrorism is attractive—and has always been attractive to discontented groups—because it is a particularly inexpensive form of violence (or war). For instance, suicide bombings, which have become increasingly common worldwide since 1979, are uniquely inexpensive. As Bruce Hoffman and Gordon McCormick have noted, “The improvised explosive devices worn or carried by a suicide bomber, for example, can cost less than \$150 to produce. The bombers themselves are expendable assets.”⁹⁶ The more costly part of the operation is the preexisting organization that must recruit, indoctrinate, and guide the suicide bomber through the operation.

In addition, when they do require larger sums of money, terrorists are extremely versatile and creative. The 9/11 Commission recognized this fact when they stated: “Though progress apparently has been made [to attack terrorist financing], terrorists have shown considerable creativity in their methods of moving money. If al Qaeda is replaced by smaller, decentralized terrorist groups, the premise behind the government’s efforts—that terrorists need a financial support network—may become outdated.”⁹⁷ The commission also noted, as described above, that many terrorist operations can simply be self-funded without sophisticated reliance on outside contributors or elaborate money-making schemes: “some terrorist operations do not rely on outside sources of money and may now be self-funding, either through legitimate employment or low-level criminal activity.”⁹⁸ In addition, as noted earlier, terrorists are reverting to more fundamental methods of transferring money, such as enlisting IVTS, engaging in bulk cash smuggling, or simply transferring “value” anonymously via e-cash (or e-gold) on the Internet. Further, as money laundering regimes become more advanced in rich, developed countries (and even moderately wealthy, developing countries), terrorist organizations always have the option of turning to “less governed spaces”—in other words, operating in those areas of the world outside the purview of governments and financial regulators.⁹⁹

However, it is also clear that increasing global scrutiny of financial transactions does have an impact. Among other things, it reduces

terrorists' functional space; it requires them to operate in less convenient areas of the world, areas where they may become vulnerable to law enforcement intervention or areas from which terrorist operations—particularly those aimed at developed countries—are much more difficult to execute. What should be recognized and acknowledged, however, is the fact that terrorism is a complex, political phenomenon that cannot be simply eliminated by starving terrorists of their money. Countering terrorism in the long term will still require that governments honestly and forthrightly take on those sensitive questions or issues that provide the “political oxygen” of international terrorism.¹⁰⁰ Unless that reality is confronted honestly, terrorists will always find a way to fund their operations.

Acknowledgments

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not purport to reflect the position or official policy of the Naval War College, Department of Defense, or any other U.S. governmental agency.

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The Shadow Economy

The Forgotten Infrastructure of Terrorist Financing

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and Samuel S. Stanton Jr.*

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE ECONOMY AFFECT TERRORISM? And more importantly, how do a government's economic policies sometimes assist terrorists in creating an infrastructure for financing terrorism? While terrorist organizations seek various objectives, engage in a myriad of violent acts, and have diverse social and ideological backgrounds, they share a common need for sufficient funding to meet their objectives. This chapter will examine the role of the shadow economy in helping terrorists to acquire that funding. To this end, we examine the theory behind the shadow economy and the effects it can have on terrorist organizations with regard to financing. We believe that the shadow economy can provide an infrastructure for terrorist organizations to operate in, whereby financing becomes easier and detecting it becomes more difficult.

The Shadow Economy

Each economy harbors an element seldom discussed save by economists, and then only in selected circles—the shadow economy. Shadow economic activities are activities that are underground, covert, or illegal. Governments have an interest in determining the size of the shadow

economy.¹ First, governments need to provide accurate estimates of the size of the economy; and second, they must determine what activities lie outside the state's regulatory structure in order to bring these activities into the regulatory structure and derive revenue. Once shadow activities are identified and mapped, the state can devise policies to shrink the shadow sector of the economy. The ability to reduce or eliminate the shadow economy becomes more important if it finances the terrorist organizations that are trying to overthrow the government. Western countries—especially the United States—are particularly concerned with this aspect of the shadow economy, since it also finances global terrorism.

A shadow economy cannot be measured unless it is defined. The definition of the shadow economy is not uniform within the economic literature. Common definitions revolve around economic activity that is not officially calculated in the gross national product, while Philip Smith defines it as “market-based production of goods and services, whether legal or illegal, that escapes detection in the official estimates.”² Some scholars broadly define a shadow economy as “those economic activities and the income derived from them that circumvent or otherwise escape government regulation, taxation or observation.”³ German economist Friedrich Schneider, who has conducted extensive research on shadow economies worldwide, provides a definition that encompasses those activities that may be undertaken by terrorist organizations: “The shadow economy includes unreported income from the production of legal goods and services, either from monetary or barter transactions—and so includes all economic activities that would generally be taxable were they reported to the state (tax) authorities.”⁴

The presence of a shadow economy (which all countries have) does not indicate that the country is either poor or wealthy; a shadow economy and its magnitude merely indicate how much economic activity is outside the “official” sector. Nor does a shadow economy necessarily impact levels of poverty; in fact, researchers have found no conclusive evidence that poverty or poor nations are linked to higher levels of terrorism.⁵ Studies also indicate that members of terrorist organizations tend to come from more affluent segments of the population of their respective countries.⁶ Thus, we analyze the shadow economy as an instrument that can be used by terrorist organizations for financing, not as an underlying cause of terrorism.

Building on our definition of the shadow economy, we follow the taxonomy of the shadow economy to explain how shadow activities can support terrorist financing. Table 6.1 details the various nonobservable economic activities that comprise the shadow economy.

Table 6.1 Taxonomy of Types of Underground Economic Activities

Type of Activity	Monetary Transactions	Nonmonetary Transactions		
Illegal Activities	Trade with stolen goods; drug dealing and manufacturing; prostitution; gambling; smuggling; fraud; etc.	Barter of drugs, stolen goods, smuggling, etc.; produce or grow drugs for own use; theft for own use		
	Tax			
	Tax Evasion	Avoidance	Tax Evasion	Tax Avoidance
Legal Activities	Unreported income from self-employment; wages, salaries, and assets from unreported work related to legal services and goods	Employee discounts, fringe benefits	Barter of legal services and goods	All do-it-yourself work and neighbor help

Source: Friedrich Schneider and Robert Klinglmair, *Shadow Economies around the World: What Do We Know?* Discussion Paper No. 1043 (Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), March 2004), 5. Adapted from Owen Lippert and Michael Walker, eds., *The Underground Economy: Global Evidences of Its Size and Impact* (Vancouver, BC: Frazer Institute, 1997).

This classification of underground, shadow economic activities comprises two axes; the horizontal axis indicates monetary and nonmonetary transactions, while the vertical axis denotes the dichotomy between legal and illegal activities. For our purposes these distinctions fit well into scenarios of terrorist financing, where the power of the state to resist terrorism is at stake. To be sure, the capacity of the state to resist terrorist demands is implicit in its capacity to regulate its economy. The capacity of the state to harness its economy through various regulatory, law enforcement, or tax mechanisms can be seen in how successful the state controls legal or illegal transactions.

Causes of the Shadow Economy

The economics literature considers the shadow economy primarily as a result of various factors, but the following in particular:

1. Increasing tax burden, either direct (sales, value-added-tax, income, real estate, etc.) or through increasing social security contributions' burden (increased withholding or surcharges).
2. An increase in the number and intensity of regulations in the official economy, especially in the labor markets.
3. Reductions in work hours either through layoffs or work slowdowns, early retirement, and growing unemployment both in the private and public sectors.
4. Decline in the loyalty of the populace toward the government and its regulations or a decrease in the ability of the government to control the population and its economic activities.
5. The presence of ethnic/racial conflict, civil war, and/or terrorist organizations that are not funded by other governments. After the Cold War, these groups were forced to finance most if not all of their activities themselves, which forced them into shadow economy activities for obvious reasons.
6. In the old Soviet Bloc countries, the transition from socialism to capitalism destroyed the social safety nets, increased unemployment, and reduced or diminished health care, social security, etc. Augmented by inflation and lack of government infrastructure to curb shadow economic activities, this has increased participation in the unofficial sector.

The influence of various types of taxation denotes how rising tax rates increase the prevalence and size of shadow economies. In a study of 14 Latin American nations, Loayza found that primary determinants of the shadow economy to be the tax burden, labor market restrictions, and the strength and efficiency of government institutions.⁷ These findings indicate that the greater the tax burden, the greater the incentive to resort to the nonobservable economy for labor, as well as barter for heavily taxed goods. Thus, one major determinant of the shadow economy is the overall tax burden—a higher burden tends to increase the size of the shadow economy, as well as the incentive to avoid “official” work. As seen in the above table, this type of activity encompasses monetary transactions such as tax evasion or tax avoidance. Although there are numerous examples of revolutions, ethnic conflicts, and terrorist activities as a result of the overburden of taxes, researchers have not found significant links between taxation and terrorist activities within a particular country. Instead, ethnic conflicts, social tensions, and terrorism simply take advantage of the presence of (and the opportunities created by) the existing shadow economy of the country to sustain its activities.

The intensity of the regulatory environment also affects the shadow economy. Economists Johnson, Kaufmann, and Zoido-Lobaton recently demonstrated how labor market regulations for both citizens and foreigners affect the incentive structure to avoid engagement in shadow economy activities.⁸ Furthermore, the number of laws, regulations, and license requirements has been found to limit the choices for those individuals seeking to participate in the economy. De Soto reinforces this point by asserting that increased regulation leads to increased entry costs in the official economy; thus entrepreneurs favor the unofficial economy where entry is easier.⁹ While technically illegal, these shadow entrepreneurs fill a void created by an excessive regulatory state.

Increased labor regulation reduces official employment by creating incentives for firms to hire shadow workers while cutting the hours of “official” workers. Workers who have had their work hours cut are provided with incentives to engage in shadow activities, thus increasing the overall size of the nonobservable economy. Hunt argues that Volkswagen workers who were limited in the hours they worked—against their wishes—provided the labor for a home reconstruction and renovation boom.¹⁰ This sort of activity is a type of tax evasion based upon barter of goods and services, or neighbors’ help, which in each instance results in lost tax revenue and an increase in the shadow economy. In the old Soviet Bloc countries, the collapse of the system created an opportunity to avoid tax payment altogether. Simultaneously, the reduced or vanished police authority and the lucrative return on illegal activities have resulted in expansion of all kinds of illegal shadow economy activities in these countries. In general, privatization in the Soviet Bloc countries has increased the size of the shadow economy in these countries substantially.¹¹

Reduced revenues can lead to either decreased public expenditures or a higher overall tax burden for the remaining taxpayers to offset the loss. In the former case, decreased public spending can lead to loss of citizen loyalty, especially for minority groups who may rely upon income transfers or government developmental aid. A sudden drop in spending can test the loyalty of even majority groups. To be sure, once a public service is provided, restricting or discontinuing the service is difficult. Any reduction in public spending per person without an accompanying increase in replacement benefits (tangible or intangible) or security will meet with resentment in most societies. This is especially important where terrorist groups operate, as they can exploit the inability of the government to provide services. Indeed the rise of Hamas in the Palestinian territories can be traced to the inability of the PLO to provide such services.¹² Another example is that of the Islamic State. The Islamic State (IS, previously known

as ISIL or ISIS) has been extremely successful in its conquest and in its ability to create a public administration infrastructure, including a system that finances its operations and social welfare programs. At the core of IS financing are various schemes that fall under the rubric of the shadow economy. Howard Shatz of the RAND Corporation has described how IS “raises most of its money from the territories it feeds off of, making the problem of beating back the group exceedingly difficult.”¹³

A higher tax burden either in developed or developing nations signifies an attempt by the government to increase its power or control over the population on one hand, while also deriving revenue on the other hand. Clearly, state capacity is tied to its ability to finance its endeavors and the ability to increase taxes to an optimum level, in order to maintain control. In segmented societies, excessive control may prod ethnic minorities to seek autonomy or rebellion. Political violence in the form of terrorism is also an outcome of an overly extractive state. For developed nations, an increase in the tax burden leads to a larger shadow economy as incentives for productive “official” employment are lessened. In developing countries, a lack of the rule of law, poor institutions, or authoritarian leaders and corruption leads to larger shadow economies.

In both instances, the logic of the Laffer Curve is evident, where increasing taxes in a developing nation beyond the optimum level will lead to a decreased official sector and increased shadow economy.¹⁴ As taxes rise, an incentive to exit the official sector is created. Theoretically, when taxes reach 100 percent of income, employment in the official economy would be nil, while employment in the shadow economy would be full. Alienated groups will resort to shadow economy activity especially if—as is the case in many developing countries—they are economically disadvantaged vis-à-vis the dominant group. This may also have political repercussions for state capacity and terrorism. In developed countries, the political repercussions of an increased tax burden will primarily be felt through the polls, while in developing nations rebellion, civil war, and terrorism directed against the government are common. In either instance, an increased tax burden has implications for the shadow economy, the official economy, and politics.

The above discussion of the shadow economy revolves around those activities that are legal, involving either monetary transactions or nonmonetary transactions through tax evasion or tax avoidance. However, many activities of the shadow economy are based upon illegal monetary or nonmonetary transactions. Illegal activities involving narcotics, smuggling, and precious metals are especially of interest to terrorist groups due to the high value of the commodity. Usually, tax evasion is an individual act, part

of which may or may not be diverted to support a cause, be it an ethnic conflict, civil war, or terrorism. On the other hand, narcotics, smuggling, and precious metals generate revenue, usually from beyond the borders of the base country. These activities have the added advantage—from the terrorists' point of view—of hurting or damaging the afflicted countries, while generating lucrative revenue to finance terrorist activities. Transportation and distribution of these illegal products requires a higher level of sophistication and mastery of logistics that benefit the terrorist in obtaining their weapons. Monetary transactions might include the trade of stolen goods, manufacture and distribution of illegal drugs, small-scale specialized manufacturing, prostitution, gambling, smuggling, all types of fraud, and in general, all nonviolent felonious activity.

Nonmonetary illegal transactions include barter for drugs, stolen goods, drug production for barter or personal use, as well as theft for one's personal use. These are the types of activities that make the shadow economy difficult to measure, especially if it is well established and relatively dependent upon illegal activities. While not explicitly noted in the literature, the implication is that legal activities may eventually turn into illegal activities should the tax or regulatory burden of the state increase to a significant level. This is especially true in many underdeveloped economies, where the rule of law and judicial independence are absent, while onerous regulatory regimes and corruption are present.¹⁵

The Shadow Economy and Terrorism

Once the basis of a shadow economy is understood, its general effects on creating an infrastructure for the financing of terrorist organizations become clear. We begin with the assumption that there are social, ethnic, or religious groups under some sort of economic or political disenfranchisement. While this situation may not always be the case, we believe that most groups as such feel economic or political pressure.

We base part of our theoretical framework on the work of Albert Hirschman, who presents a theory based upon organizational behavior.¹⁶ We see the state, and groups within the state, behaving in much the same manner as Hirschman predicts individuals would in a firm. For Hirschman, the behavioral options for individuals in the firm are divided into three aspects. One may "voice" dissent by complaining about a deteriorating condition in the firm, or if the individual sees no improvement in conditions, they may exercise the option of "exit," thereby leaving the firm. Related to this, but in a separate category, is the notion of loyalty. Loyalty is a predictor of the likelihood of an individual using the "voice" or "exit"



Figure 6.1 Exit–Voice Continuum.

option. Graphically, we can see the relationship between the three concepts as a spectrum called loyalty. On the low end or far right side we would place “exit” while on the opposite end with high loyalty we would place “voice” (see Figure 6.1).

In practice, Hirschman notes that there are two principal determinants of when one resorts to voice or exit.¹⁷ The first is the extent to which the person is willing to trade off the certainty of exit against the uncertainties of an improvement in the deteriorating organization. Second is the person’s assessment of their ability to influence the organization. These factors drive the voice/exit determination. Implicit in Hirschman’s model is the important assumption that the firm or organization is in decline. Thus, perceived or actual decline is an impetus for the person to begin making the voice/exit calculus depending on the loyalty.

Clearly, exit/voice and loyalty are complex interrelationships. For the purpose of this chapter, we define loyalty as good citizenship and acceptance of the current political and economic institutions. On the other hand “exit” is an option that the dissatisfied citizen or terrorist can exercise within the economic sphere (we assume they have already exited the political sphere). One can exit the official sector for the informal or shadow sector either fully or in part. Any movement toward the shadow sector creates an increase in the infrastructure available to the terrorist. Sympathizers may participate in both the official and shadow economies. Such sympathizers are the basis of the shadow economy’s infrastructure that the terrorist organization depends upon for financial and material support.

Having explained the shadow economy and its effects on the supporting infrastructure available to terrorist organizations, we now offer a central observation based upon the notion that a person or persons will exit the official economy to participate—either in whole or in part—in the shadow economy in order to support terrorist organizations. Our assertion is that an increase in the factors comprising the shadow economy increases the avenues for participation in the shadow economy by supporters of terror organizations or terrorists themselves. Furthermore, a larger shadow economy offers greater potential (and avenues) for creating

an infrastructure for material and financial support for terrorist organizations. Finally, the poorer a region or a country, the greater the need for a terrorist organization to engage in transnational shadow economic activities (especially illegal activities), because it is more difficult for the poor to finance terrorists. The latter situation is more applicable to organizations that lack foreign funding. In fact, all the organizations previously financed by the Soviet Union, Libya, and Saudi Arabia are now either out of operation or are engaged in some sort of shadow economic activity, especially of the illegal type. The Islamic State uses the shadow economy in various ways to finance its operations. Both legal and illegal activities that include monetary and nonmonetary transactions are part of the IS self-financing schema. A precise account of all IS shadow economic activities is naturally impossible, but recent reports indicate the group does take advantage of the volatility in the region to finance a considerable portion of its operations through shadow economy activities.

The basic logic of our argument is depicted in Figure 6.2, which demonstrates how an increasingly large public sector, or more demands by the state on resources (such as higher taxes or more onerous regulations), will create incentives for individuals to defect to the shadow economy.

As state revenue decreases as a result of an increase in the shadow economy, the official sector is forced to raise taxes, which will cause even further increase in the shadow economy. Eventually, the public sector will

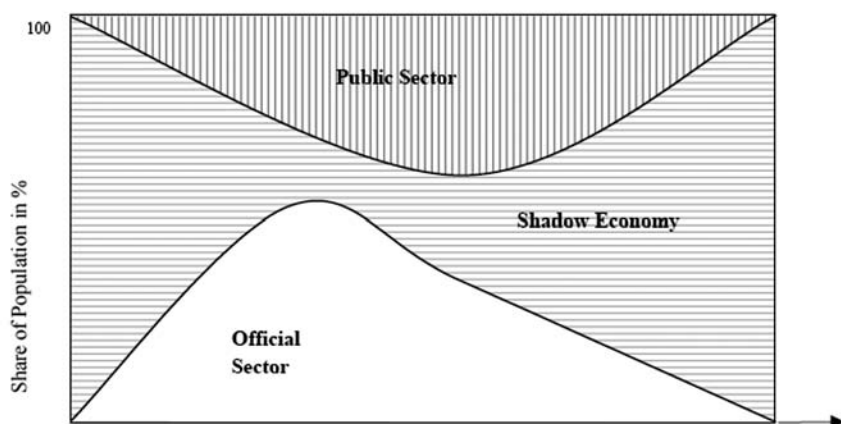


Figure 6.2 Stylized Model of an Increasing Shadow Economy (Percent of GDP as Shadow Economy). Adapted from Dr. Dominik H. Enste, “The Shadow Economy and Institutional Change in Transition Countries, Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft, Köln, 2003, p. 40.

decline, as defections to the shadow economy make revenue collection impossible. If we look at this scenario on a linear continuum we can see how consolidation of state power and economic development creates conditions of economic prosperity. Economic prosperity leads to the expansion of the public sector, creates “institutional sclerosis” to use Mancur Olson’s terminology,¹⁸ and eventually defections to the shadow economy. Increasing defection and grievances lead to a potential terrorist infrastructure. It might be useful to distinguish between localized terrorism, for example Basque separatists in Spain or the Irish Republic Army in Ireland, and global terrorism such as Al Qaeda. In the case of the former, we would expect to find decreasing levels of loyalty toward the government among segments of a population who suffer disproportionately from the tax burden or social injustice. In contrast, the grievances that motivate global terrorism typically transcend a particular government’s policies or tax burdens. However, although the sources of disenfranchisement that may lead to political violence are different, there is no evidence to support the notion that the mechanisms of terrorist financing differ. Regardless of the origin of the terrorist movement, the organization can benefit from an increase in the shadow economy, which creates conditions where dissatisfied groups have an infrastructure to engage in political violence. Graphically, we superimpose this process on the shadow economy model, as seen in Figure 6.3.

Clearly, there are limitations to our analysis. The first is the direction of causality question—does the existence of shadow economy cause terrorism or does terrorism cause a shadow economy? We believe that terrorist behavior is indeed a path-dependent process, and that while the process can be halted or redirected, certain conditions in general are necessary for terrorist activities or political violence to occur. At the same time, the processes that create an increase in the shadow economy follow a similar path and logic. We theorize that instead of attempting to determine the direction of causality, conceptualizing the co-movement of both processes is analytically useful for capturing the essence of the decision either to use voice or to exit the economic system (and by extension, the political system).

Second, we acknowledge that the shadow economy is a hybrid of legal and illegal activities. The greater the share of the illegal activity in the shadow economy, the greater the harm to the society and the larger the problem for government. The problem for analysts is to determine how the ratio of each component (legal/illegal) is measured. Furthermore, it is necessary to identify the point at which, during the increase in shadow economy (and increase in potential terrorist infrastructure), this ratio

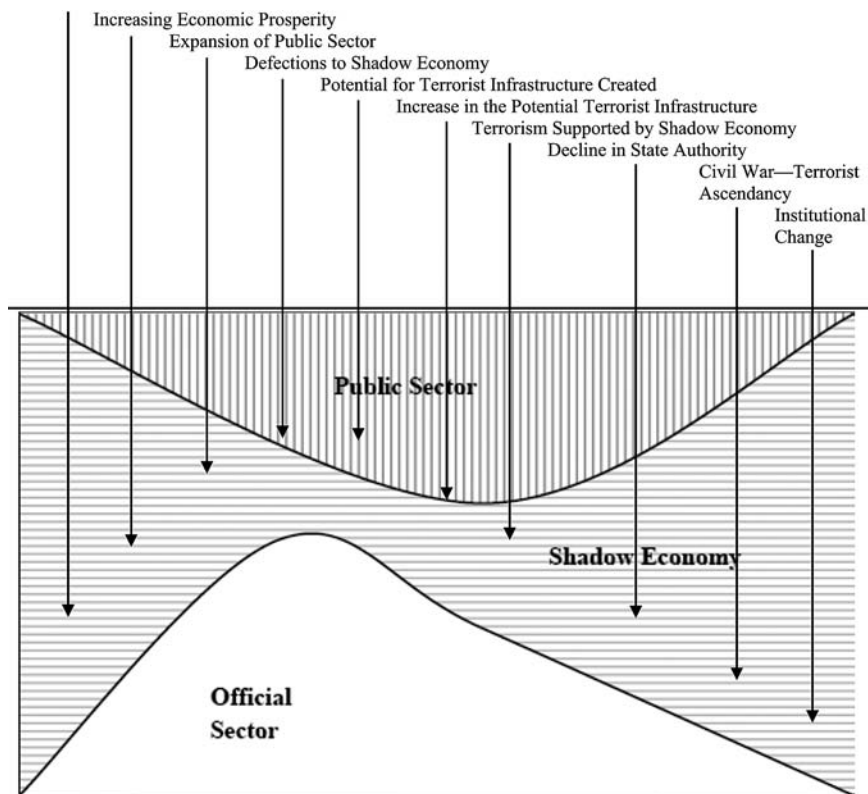


Figure 6.3 The Consolidation of State Power/Decrease in Shadow Economy.

moves from majority legal to majority illegal. This legal/illegal switch may indeed occur, yet the tracking and measurement of such activities is difficult and beyond the scope of this chapter.¹⁹ An example of this shift is the ascendancy of the Islamic State. This quasi-state in Iraq and Syria has taken over many of the functions of governance in the area under its control. As IS fighters gained control over territory, the economy and governance shifted rather dramatically to an IS-dominated system. Despite the lack of detail regarding the exact transition mechanism, it is fair to say that IS has made this shift. We believe that our analysis provided below points to interesting findings and further direction for research into the infrastructure that states inadvertently provide to terrorists and how these vulnerabilities can be exploited by terror groups. This, in turn, has implications for efforts to combat terrorism.

How the Shadow Economy Can Affect Political Violence and Terrorism

Since political violence can take many forms, the shadow economy can also affect political violence in many ways. The shadow economy can provide terrorists or others with numerous financing opportunities in both legal and illegal realms of activity, each of which requires a unique response as part of a comprehensive strategy for combating terrorism.

Legal

Legal monetary transactions can include tax evasion, where individuals who sympathize with (or are part of) a terrorist organization redirect some of their income while underreporting their total income, or engage in self-employment to finance the organization. Unreported income can come from legal sources, but is redirected to terrorist organizations. Diverting taxes on a large scale from government to terrorists increases the overall share of the shadow economy. Another method would involve tax avoidance, if one directed fringe benefits or such things as employee discounts toward terrorist activities/organizations. Clearly, these are not violent or illegal economic activities, but they do, however, provide an infrastructure for the terrorist or terror organization to operate within. A nation with a larger legal monetary shadow economy will be able to provide a more extensive infrastructure for clandestine support, as opposed to a nation with a smaller shadow economy.

Legal activities of a nonmonetary nature can be in the form of bartering legal goods or services as well as helping neighbors. These activities avoid any form of taxation. Each form of shadow activity can add to an infrastructure that is conducive to terrorist organizations. Clearly, terrorist organizations do not operate in a vacuum, and a nation with the potential for an extensive infrastructure would be an attractive home base for such organizations, whether they have domestic or international goals. A more important form of participation is through sheltering terrorists by providing housing, food, clothing, and logistical information to enable terrorists' movement through a territory. Examples of this include Vietcong sympathizers in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, who enabled the insurgents to carry out numerous, extended, and prolonged attacks against South Vietnamese and American forces. A terrorist organization with access to revenue through legal or illegal activities can, and often does, reimburse the sympathizers to expand its support base. Reportedly the Islamic State pays death benefits to the wives and children of its fighters.²⁰ This unique aspect of the shadow economy applies not only to terrorist activities but to

rebel groups who engage in political violence as well as social and ideologically motivated groups who seek regime change.

The existence of a large legal shadow economy would provide the necessary requirements for terror organizations. Countries with such a shadow sector are primarily developed, high-income countries, where high taxation and regulatory burdens create conditions for legal shadow activities. Terrorist incidents—such as the March 2004 Madrid attack, the July 2005 London bombing, or the 2013 Boston Marathon attack—demonstrate how terrorists can operate in developed nations that have the potential for an extensive legal shadow infrastructure.

Illegal

Illegal activities that comprise the overall shadow economy also take the forms of monetary and nonmonetary transactions. Monetary transactions include trade of stolen goods; drug production and distribution; prostitution, gambling, and smuggling of all types; and fraud. The single most important link in the illegal shadow economy system is the middleman. The middlemen connect the suppliers and buyers without exposing either source, even if one of the participating groups happens to be a terrorist organization. Without this lifeline, no terrorist organization can manage to finance its survival.

Trade in stolen goods or natural resources is a form of terrorist financing that has been increasingly prevalent in the post–Cold War era. Natural resources can take two forms, renewable and nonrenewable. Renewable resources such as agricultural commodities have the potential to become sources of financing for terror organizations. However, the transport and sale of commodities such as grains, sugar, or wood products requires a logistical network beyond the capabilities of many terror organizations. The Islamic State provides an example of this on a much larger scale than has been seen before. The largest source of IS revenues is the sale of oil from both Syrian and Iraqi sources. The sale of oil can be considered an illegal activity since it is not done on the globalized petroleum market as is done by other countries. Reportedly IS has been able to tap into production at five oilfields,²¹ resulting in estimated revenues of \$1–2 million per day.²² Black market oil can be sold at a significant discount, which makes such transactions profitable for all parties.²³ Refining oil is also a way IS can earn money for operations. Running both small and large refineries not only allows IS to supply its armed forces with fuel and lubricants but also comprises a value-added commodity that can be exchanged for a premium (compared to crude oil). This sort of barter is a type of nonmonetary

transaction that IS is well suited for, given its propensity to supply not only its own needs but to selectively supply its tactical allies or even its enemies.²⁴

While on a small scale such shadow activities would provide support, they would be incapable of providing the level of income needed to support an extended organization. In major ethnic conflicts, civil wars, and sometimes in terrorist activities, feeding and supplying the “troops” in the field becomes a decisive component. Since few terrorist groups have robust agricultural and logistical capabilities, access to a shadow economy can play a vital role in the terrorists’ survival and operations.²⁵ IS, for example, has taken control of the market for grain in western Iraq, and farmers are forced to pay a tax based not on the size of the crop but on their land holdings. This fixed property tax is more regressive than the productivity-based tax, even if the generated tax is the same. Presumably the tax can be paid in kind, thus making this form of barter part of the shadow economy. Small-scale terrorist groups can carry enough currency to allow them to obtain their needs from the market. On the other hand, nonrenewable natural resources can play a much larger role in the creation of a shadow economy—supporting infrastructure for terrorists.

Recent research conducted by Collier and Hoeffler found that the “extent of primary commodity exports is the strongest single influence on the risk of conflict”; although they focus on civil war, the research has implications for the study of terrorist networks as well.²⁶ A refinement by Fearon notes how commodity exports used to fund civil wars tend to be confined to oil, which has high value relative to the costs of production.²⁷ Moreover, access through a myriad of pipelines and distribution hubs allows rebels or terrorists to skim from overall national production. Skimming is small compared to total production and the cost of policing production facilities and pipelines. This sort of environment allows a shadow economy to operate with relative immunity and provide prolonged and substantial financial support for the terrorist organization. This sort of trade can grow significantly in a short time period. The revenue from monetary transactions between IS and Turkey increased 79 percent from the time IS gained control of the region around Aleppo and the Oncupinar border crossing. While IS has increased its trade with Turkey, the Kurdish region of Iraq and Syria has seen a 40–50 percent decrease in trade with Turkey.²⁸ These changes indicate that IS has become more and more integrated into the economy of the region as well as that elements within Turkey are profiting from this arrangement. To be sure, shadow economies operate within all nations, and volatility on one’s border increases the possibility of an increase in shadow economic activities in border areas.

Of course, the logistics involved in shadow economy operations are important if nonrenewable resources are being used in an illicit manner. Trucks and other associated equipment would be needed for oil skimming, as well as a buyer. Other high-volume commodities would necessitate greater logistical support. Two natural resources that entail less logistical preparation are diamonds and minerals. While mineral looting or smuggling can be a relatively simple process, requiring virtually no logistical support, diamonds are even easier to loot and smuggle. A new variant of this type of activity is the trade in antiquities in areas under the control of IS. This form of shadow economy transaction, monetary or non-monetary based, is important since it is not only tolerated by IS but also because IS is an active participant. Antiquities may be plundered by IS or locals. Local thieves or gangs can and do trade in antiquities. These groups are allowed to operate only as long as they pay a fee to IS of approximately 20–50 percent of the profits.²⁹ This type of illegal trade is a form of subcontracting or principal agent arrangement where the agents are taxed by the principals. The logic is simple—the more transportable or value per pound the more likely terror organizations will attempt to use this portion of the shadow economy to finance their operations. While diamond or gold smuggling may be relatively simple compared to oil skimming, an important aspect of this sort of activity is the transaction cost involved in selling the stolen goods. In the same way that a thief pays a “premium” to the buyer of the stolen goods, so does the purveyor of looted gems or minerals. This premium is based upon a separate infrastructure that moves goods out of the country and the risk involved to those engaged in the smuggling. Since the total value of the smuggled goods is very high, capturing the smugglers has high payoff as well, justifying increased police and military tracking. Increased government policing can raise this premium to unacceptable levels, thereby closing off this avenue of terrorist financing and eliminating an element of the shadow economy infrastructure of terrorist organizations.

Within the past few years, diamond looting has been discussed as a chief form of financing for civil wars in West Africa. For example, recent studies note how the production of diamonds increases the likelihood of civil war, while also accounting for the state capacity and the propensity to use this sort of financing.³⁰ Of particular interest for our purpose in this chapter is to understand how political leaders can alter the market or infrastructure for looting by changing modes of extraction. The shape of the shadow economy can be changed, provided leaders recognize the significance of the shadow economy and how it can be used to provide an infrastructure for terrorist organizations. These studies of diamond looting in

support of civil war rebels illustrates how structural incentives of the economy can create shadow economy elements that are amenable to a terrorist infrastructure.

The Islamic State combines elements of an extortion state with the shadow economy. The business model requires local administrators to forward approximately 20 percent of their local income to the next administrative level. Higher echelons will then redistribute funds where they are needed the most. Local funds include kidnapping, ransoms, and extortion rackets.³¹ These activities fit the illegal monetary transactions type of shadow economy activity. Other sources of funding that are similar include protection payments from Christians, which allow the Christians to stay in the area. This form of extortion is particularly difficult for many Christians, as the payment is demanded in gold. This would be the sort of illegal non-monetary transaction that comprises part of the overall shadow economy.

The illegal narcotics trade is another area of both nonmonetary and monetary transactions that can contribute to an infrastructure for terrorist organizations. As with looting of various nonrenewable natural resources, the drug trade requires an infrastructure to be profitable for terrorist organizations.³² The Taliban's drug dealing did not operate in a vacuum but thrived in lawless regions where the Taliban taxed the raw opium while also funneling it to dealers outside the country, who could then place it into the global drug pipeline.³³ Not controlling the drug chain makes terrorists who trade drugs price takers, as they add little value to the finished product other than the initial commodity. While terror organizations could enter the product chain and add value at multiple stages (as exemplified by FARC activities in Colombia), such options would be dependent upon the structure of the shadow economy (the illegal-to-legal ratio or the monetary to nonmonetary ratio). Terrorist organizations can control the flow of products—both legal and illegal—by virtue of controlling a territory or by making their passage impossible without their explicit approval and/or involvement. In doing so, terrorists can obtain both the support of the masses and the poor while financing their activities. The Taliban, for example, controlled most of Afghanistan which means they could weed out the middlemen, who are usually the greatest benefactors of the narcotics trade. The Taliban could continue to pay farmers the same or even more than middlemen, take the product from farms to central distribution centers with little more than transportation costs, and create a national monopoly. They would have become heroes in the eyes of the peasants, while making more money than (nonmonopolist) middlemen at a reduced cost, because unlike the middlemen they neither have to pay bribes nor risk loss of their inventory to confiscation. As a major producer, they would

increase their leverage versus international opium refiners and could affect the overall market costs.

Illegal monetary transactions can also take the form of manufacturing. For example, terrorist organizations can and do manufacture various goods for their cause. While these goods are primarily “the tools of the trade” such as explosives or guns, they also manufacture a select number of goods that can be sold on the shadow market. In this category, we can place the manufacture of illegal drugs that do not require a supply chain nor multiple processes. Methamphetamine is a perfect example of the type of “low-tech” drug manufacture that has a high value-to-weight ratio and is thus attractive to smugglers. Moreover, the precursor chemicals are readily available, as are instructions or “recipes.”

Another facet of the illegal monetary shadow economy would be organized illegal activities, or what is commonly referred to as organized crime.³⁴ In general, organized crime denotes ethnically based mafia-type groups who rely upon ethnic or family ties to maintain their cohesiveness. The archetypical example is Mario Puzo’s *Godfather* series. Modern terrorist groups may differ in that they are more ideologically based, yet if residing in a country where there exists a sizable shadow economy, they will have the required infrastructure to engage in mafia-like activities. These activities might include gambling, prostitution, fraud, or extortion. Such illegal enterprises may not be well suited to terrorist groups who have moral or religious injunctions against these types of social vices—although we should note that the Taliban did issue fatwas stating that while drug use was morally wrong, supplying drugs to *infidels* was not a moral transgression. Even if mafia-like illegal activities were to appeal to terrorist groups, movement into such areas would be detrimental to the terrorists, as they would potentially be infringing on areas of the shadow economy occupied by established groups. We can expect established mafias to vigorously defend their “turf,” thus making forays into these areas less attractive to terrorist organizations. While terrorist groups may engage in these types of activities, we could expect that they would have only minimal involvement, as most areas would already be exploited by established organized crime groups.

In sum, the various illegal activities that terrorist organizations may avail themselves of in the shadow economy are diverse, each with attending risks and rewards. We would envision a terrorist group to be nimble and be able to switch from one shadow economic activity to another in short order. Movement from the illegal to legal may be more difficult. Clearly, the size of a country’s shadow economy creates ample opportunities that terrorists may exploit for financing their operations.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the concept of the shadow economy and how it creates an infrastructure that may be exploited by terrorists for financing and other activities necessary to their operations. The irony for most of the decision makers of most countries is that public policy decisions intended to create a better quality of life—such as a social security system that collects contributions through taxes and then provides a basic human security “safety net” for all its citizens—may actually create an infrastructure where terror organizations can operate, finance themselves, and carry out attacks on the very sociopolitical system that unwittingly supports them. A comprehensive approach to combating terrorism thus requires significant monitoring of the shadow economy, along with appropriate intelligence and law enforcement efforts to intervene and constrain the critical financial lifeblood of terrorist groups.

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Organized Criminal Networks and Terrorism

J. P. Larsson

IN A DARK CORNER OF ROOM 101 in Britain's New Scotland Yard, behind more or less gruesome exhibits and a range of weapons used on the streets of London, is a glass cabinet dedicated to "terrorism." True, many of the other exhibits—from forged identification documents and currency to weapons and tools of torture—have also been used for terrorist purposes, but this small exhibit is the only one dedicated purely to terrorism. Inspector Beaton's bloodstained jacket, for example, worn by the police officer as he was shot in the line of duty protecting the Royal Family in 1974, together with other items in this dark museum—such as the exploded remains of police helmets—testifies both to the importance terrorism plays in our lives and to its links with the criminal underworld. The "tools of the trade" on display illustrate that organized criminal networks have had a long-standing flirtation with terrorism. Nail bombs and assault rifles nestle together with narcotics and blindfolds used for kidnappings and abductions.

Despite the common means and methods shared by terrorists and criminal organizations, the traditional view of law enforcement has been to treat the two as completely distinct and separate, and this has in turn led to two disparate responses by government bodies, law enforcement agencies, and academic scholarship. The way to combat both terrorism and organized crime may, however, be to treat them as very similar concepts. Indeed, as the Black Museum (as this commemoration to crime in London is called) at the Metropolitan Police illustrates, the two have at times

converged to the point of being inseparable. At other times, of course, they are quite distinct, and provision needs to be made to understand this. The move from two separate concepts to an inextricably linked symbiotic relationship poses a problem for law enforcement agencies, as both structures and procedures have differed depending on legal considerations.

This chapter will look briefly at these issues, by first offering a brief overview of the subject of organized crime, taken quite separately from terrorism, and then exploring some of the similarities between them, how the two interact, and what the law enforcement response is and can be. Finally, some thoughts will be offered about how both terrorism and organized crime can be countered in the 21st century.

Organized Crime

Organized crime has for a long time tickled the fancy of the public by fictional—or semifictional—accounts of con men, gangs, mobs, and mafias. The mass media, similarly, is fond of describing the war that is being fought on our streets by organized criminals, often armed better than law enforcement officers, and the amount of money it costs society. As with any fictional accounts there are always some truths in these stories. Organized crime does exist and is big and dangerous business, estimated by some reports as having annual revenues of up to US\$1 trillion.¹ Due to the very nature of organized crime, it is of course impossible to analyze its economic impact to any degree of accuracy, but some observers put money laundering alone as the third biggest revenue-producing business in the world after foreign exchange and oil. In the United Kingdom, the National Crime Agency (NCA) estimated at its creation in 2013 that the economic and social costs generated by organized crime is at least £24 billion per year—or more than £350 for every person in the country—and up to around £40 billion (approximately US\$75 billion).

Although serious and organized crime defies definition (almost as much as terrorism), every society has some sort or “organized” crime, from the “Yakuza” groups in Japan to the Chinese “Triads” and the well-known Italian mafias. Some organized criminal networks are so well known that their name becomes synonymous with organized crime, even when not directly referring to that group. Such is the case with the Sicilian Mafia, only one of the four largest organized criminal networks in Italy (the others being the Camorra, the ‘Ndrangheta, and Sacra Corona Unita), which has lent its name to a host of nonrelated organizations. It is not uncommon to hear about the “Russian Mafia” or the “Albanian Mafia,” for example. While this makes it easier for the media and the public at large, it is not helpful for

practitioners, as it does not differentiate between important historical and methodological differences.²

While definitions of organized crime may elude academics and researchers, practitioners would agree that there is a range of “types” of organized crime including drug traffickers, extortion rackets, prison gangs, motorcycle gangs, people traffickers, arms smugglers, white-collar crime, blue-collar crime, financial or violent crime, cyber crime, pedophile networks, sexual organized crime, and, yes, terrorism (as will be explored later). There is also some consensus about *what* constitutes organized crime, and includes (but is not limited to) activities such as money laundering, trafficking, and trade in a range of goods (including drugs, human beings, arms, art and cultural objects, animals, vehicles, and body parts), extortion, kidnapping and serious violence, prostitution and gambling, protection rackets, loan sharking, counterfeiting and forgery of documents and currency, fraud, as well as corruption of officials. The list could go on, and not all organized criminal networks are involved in all (or even most) of these.

The primary motivation for all this is twofold and interlinked—financial gain and power. This is of course the same for “ordinary” criminals, but what sets them apart from organized criminals is the group structure of such networks. That is, organized criminals are not merely individual criminals who interact with other individual criminals, but they work together in a defined structure for longer than just one crime. The precise definition of organized crime may not be necessary in this chapter, especially as the academic (primarily within disciplines such as criminology and sociology) and law enforcement literature on the subject is extensive. For further reading, one of the best overviews of the issues, including definitions and types of organized crime, may be Alan Wright’s *Organized Crime*, which also has some relevance for practitioners in the subject.

Organized crime has a corrosive effect on the communities in which it happens, because it is often linked to violence, intimidation, and corruption. It can undermine legitimate business, and generates criminal capital that is likely to be used in future enterprises. In addition to this, it knows no international boundaries and is therefore sometimes known as transnational organized crime. This may, however, be a label that does not help in understanding it, as by definition it is above local-level crime. In today’s shrinking world, organized criminal networks therefore cross not only police and judiciary boundaries, but also international borders. As such networks often impact on many law enforcement jurisdictions, successfully combating them and reducing the harm they cause to societies is very difficult. Both terrorism and organized crime further undermine the state structure, making them “transnational” by definition.

Organized criminal networks are becoming more sophisticated, moving away from merely being “street gangs” or mobs to being refined corporations, making informed decisions about which countries offer environments most likely to maximize their profits while minimizing their risks. A number of political, economic, and primarily technological changes have facilitated this change. Among these are the obvious improvements in communications and transportation technology, which also (together with public transparency through various Freedom of Information legislations) has led to an increase in information about law enforcement methodologies and powers. Other reasons include the worldwide breakdown of totalitarian regimes and the emergence of liberal democracies, with their market-oriented economies, which has led to the development of global markets, the progressive removal of border controls, and free trade agreements, as well as the associated deregulation of financial systems (leading to greater ease of action by those who exploit the systems). These factors have led to a substantial increase in the economic power and political influence of organized criminal networks worldwide, which now operate globally and interact with other networks by exchanging information where mutually beneficial.

Similarities and Differences between Organized Criminal Networks and Terrorist Groups

There are, of course, both conceptual similarities and differences between terrorism and organized crime. In short, there are two main ways in which terrorism and organized criminal networks interact. The straightforward interaction relates to the involvement of international terrorist organizations in organized criminal behavior, and includes involvement in the international trade and trafficking of drugs, weapons (including weapons of mass destruction), explosives, and human beings, as well as a range of financial activities from funding to money laundering that could all be subsumed under the umbrella term “terrorist financing.” The other main strand of interaction is where no real distinction can be seen, and activities are conducted “jointly” or using the same structures.³ This relates mainly to the use of specialist professionals, such as accountants, bankers, forgers, and counterfeiters, as will be explored later in this chapter.

As has been highlighted elsewhere, both in this volume and others, terrorism often eludes direct definition and conceptualization, as is the case with organized crime. Observers of terrorism, however, generally belong in either of two camps: one explains terrorism as a form of asymmetric warfare and the other as a crime.⁴ Depending on one’s viewpoint, therefore, terrorism is either an act of war or an illegal act. To an extent, the

question of motivation and reward influences in which camp a particular terrorist act or organization fits. A political (or even a socioreligious) objective, such as the fight against an oppressive regime, would—by using Carl von Clausewitz’s oft-cited dictum that war is merely the continuation of politics by other means—make a violent act an act of war and terrorism therefore a type of warfare. Purely monetary motives, such as those pursued by serious and organized criminals, would make their violence criminal acts and as such punishable by law. Terrorists are normally motivated by political goals and objectives, and not purely by financial profit. When financial status and gain become more important to terrorists, their “special status” as terrorists is removed and they are undoubtedly organized criminals.

If considering a linear spectrum of activity, with all-out war at one extreme and “normal” crime at the other extreme, a more likely interpretation of terrorism and organized crime is that they meet somewhere in the middle. This would facilitate an understanding as to the similarity between the two concepts, and why they are often confused.

The crux of the matter is that the response to terrorism, namely counterterrorism, depends on whether terrorism is seen as an act of war or a criminal act. For the United States, for example, the events of 9/11 might have changed terrorism from being regarded as a criminal activity into an act of war. The wider issue of whether this was a kneejerk reaction or a thought-out policy change may for the present purposes be irrelevant. Of importance, however, is the reaction this forced. While special weapons and tactics may also be used against organized criminal networks, such an armed response may appear trivial when compared to the military deployments in a *war* against terrorism. The tactics available to law enforcement agencies tackling the activities both of organized criminals and terrorists are further influenced by the motivation of the criminal/terrorist networks targeted. As explained later in this chapter, law enforcement priorities sometimes conflict, and whereas a “war on terrorism” may give access to unprecedented levels of resources, it might at the same time remove those resources from countercriminal activities, as has been the case since 2001 with the U.S. involvement in places like Afghanistan.

Motivation is often crucial in the recruitment of individuals into terrorist groups and organized criminal networks. One type of motivation comes from intense loyalty, as both types of organizations tend to recruit individuals from the same (or known) familial or ethnoreligious backgrounds. There are many reasons for this, the strongest among these being the need for a high level of trust throughout any clandestine organization. It is easier to ensure the integrity of the group if everyone (or at least everyone in

a position of status) speaks the same language, comes from the same country or town, or belongs to the same family. Such close unity hampers law enforcement attempts to gain human intelligence by infiltrating such groups. Beyond this dimension, however, the similarities of recruitment-related motivation end, as organized criminal networks are more likely to be driven by pure financial gains and desires of power, while terrorists may often be driven by a “higher” or altruistic goal, such as the riddance of an oppressive or ideologically different government. There may be no overarching ideology that binds organized criminals together, but *trust* is nonetheless of fundamental importance. However, where there are no higher motives, infiltration using greed as a bargaining chip will be easier.

While there are somewhat “altruistic” organized criminals, their motivation is much like that of a mercenary in war: the cause is not of as much importance as the reward. Despite this, it would be too simplistic to consider motivation to be the only difference between organized criminal enterprises and terrorist networks. It is quite clear that the two enjoy a separate but mutually beneficial existence. This extends from the various links between people, activities, techniques, and methods needed as both have the need for similar resources as they operate outside of the law. This includes basics both desire, such as access to firearms and transport, but is particularly true in terms of counterfeit documents (for uses such as travel, identification, and shipping/transport); in terms of money laundering and other types of financing both organized criminals and terrorists often even use the same specialists (such as bankers, accountants, solicitors, and real estate agents), although these professionals may not be either organized criminals or terrorists, as such. While they are often criminals by virtue of what they are willing to do when they know the origin of the funds, they are not often on the sole payroll of an organized criminal network. At times such professionals may even be entirely “innocent” of crimes in that they are being used by criminals without knowing where the funds originally came from. Improvements in legislation and standards governing the “regulated sector” aim to tackle this, primarily with the use of suspicious transaction reporting to, for example, NCA in the United Kingdom and AUSTRAC (Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre) in Australia. Such regulations ensures that banks, realtors, and solicitors are obliged to report any suspicious financial activity by their customers, and in so doing also protect themselves.

Perversely, law enforcement efforts targeting the finances of terrorists, and in particular terrorist fundraising, has forced such groups into the realm of organized crime in order to generate revenue, where criminal groups traditionally dominated. While terrorists often dabble in organized

crime, primarily in terms of raising funds for other activities or hiding the tracks of their acts of terrorism, it is for some groups becoming second nature at times to the extent of being their sole perceivable motivation. Where raising funds, and other criminal activities, appear to be the main goal and motivation, the distinction between terrorism as a phenomenon in itself and organized crime is often inextricably blurred, as explored above.

The reverse is similarly true, where organized criminals employ terrorist tactics to achieve particular goals, especially when creating fear is of importance, as when recruiting or enforcing a debt. At times, organized criminal enterprises appear to exist solely to create a state of fear and uncertainty in the societies within which they operate, and profit seems to be secondary. While the motivation of using fear and “terrorism” to heighten the status and power of such groups may be entirely compatible with criminal activities, it nonetheless also further blurs the line between organized crime and terrorism.

There are also more formal uses of terrorism by criminal networks, seen most clearly and commonly in what is frequently called “narcoterrorism.” Drug cartels (like the Medellín and Cali cartels in South America) or traffickers (as the Afghani/Pakistani warlords) employ the methods of terrorism to run their operations that have purely criminal motivations.⁵ This makes it clear that motivation is often a good rule of thumb when differentiating between them. However, even this distinction is often blurred, where the mutual benefit may be the only clear motivation. For example, there have been several instances where the same training camps have been used by both types of groups (for example in the Libyan desert, in South America, and across Central Asia). Another example of mutual benefit can be seen in the relationship between Al Qaeda and the Taliban, both of whom derived considerable revenues from poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. Of course, as has been noted elsewhere, methods and techniques, as well as the use of professionals, does not necessitate direct contact between terrorist networks and organized criminal networks.⁶ With widely accessible information on the Internet and other public media, “best practice” and intelligence-sharing networks are not confined to the law enforcement community, but can be exploited by criminals, terrorists, researchers, and analysts alike.

At times, seemingly contradictory liaisons are formed, such as the praise lauded on Al Qaeda by American white supremacists following 9/11, or Al Qaeda’s approach to the Cosa Nostra of Italy to purchase counterfeit U.S. passports prior to those attacks.⁷ Sometimes, of course, the benefit is not explicit, and organized criminals exploit the legislation and cooperation

between countries aimed at disrupting both organized crime and terrorism. The introduction of a common European currency (the Euro) has, for example, facilitated the activity of laundering bulk cash across the continent,⁸ in particular in terms of buying real estate and thus placing and layering criminal proceeds.

Many terrorist groups will also use the experience they have gained through their terrorist activities to provide support for others, and in doing this they are taking on a role more closely aligned with organized crime. The Italian Economic and Financial Police assesses that Al Qaeda's role in Europe is now primarily as a "service provider" for affiliated Islamic terrorist groups, principally in terms of providing stolen or counterfeit travel and identity documents, safe housing, recruitment (and training) of manpower, and fundraising, often by a range of criminal activities.⁹ Such activities are more commonly associated with organized crime than with terrorism.

At practitioners' levels, some work has been done to investigate the extent and similarities, including direct connections, between serious organized crime and terrorism. To a large degree this is attempted in order to enable disruption and undermining of both types of groups by using the experiences and tactical capability of law enforcement agencies dealing with either. Researchers have also identified a number of similarities, where the two concepts are virtually indistinguishable, such as both being composed of rational actors who use violence (often extreme) and intimidation (including threats of violence) to further their ends. Physical violence extends to kidnappings and assassination for both groups, and both also use financial extortion and blackmail. The organizations are made up of cell structures, with leaders and their deputies controlling various henchmen, some of whom have specialized roles within the networks, and who find it extremely difficult to leave the group they are part of. Both types of network are knowledgeable and innovative, and often extremely flexible in terms of adapting to new working practices. Included in this is the resiliency of both types of organization; their knowledge of law enforcement techniques, capabilities, and jurisdiction; and their conscious efforts to avoid detection and disruption. In addition, both types of networks work across international boundaries and a minority of them are even sponsored by states.¹⁰

As noted earlier, therefore, the relationship between organized crime and terrorism is often taken as implicit by observers and practitioners. It appears as a given both in academic and fictional writing, not to mention in professional knowledge, especially during the past two decades. In recent years, very little thorough analysis of the convergence between

terrorism and organized crime has been attempted. Notable exceptions include Tamara Makarenko's efforts at analyzing this crime-terror nexus, along with similar research by Chris Dishman, Thomas Sanderson, and James Forest.¹¹

Law Enforcement Response

In today's world, where terrorist groups use the tried-and-tested methods of organized crime and organized criminal networks do not shun tactics that would be classed as terrorism, we sometimes find it difficult to see them as separate phenomena. One problem is the old issue of definition; another, that both sides consciously employ the knowledge and experience of the other for their own gains, thus blurring the distinction further. Sometimes the difficulty of differentiating the two leads to problems of how to deal with a particular event or group; should it be the antiterror police or the organized crime police that deal with the mafia, for example? This issue becomes more fundamental in countries where the judiciary sets the legal parameters within which different agencies can deal with these "different" problems.

However, although law enforcement agencies around the world are faced with such dilemmas, the similarities and differences between terrorism and organized crime may, in fact, be used as an advantage in combating both. This argument will be highlighted at the end of this chapter, after an outline of the relationship between organized crime and terrorism, and the problems faced by law enforcement agencies in relation to this.

Law enforcement response to both terrorism and organized criminality is by definition difficult. There are many reasons for this, although there are two main difficulties, both relating to structure—the structure of law enforcement and the structure of organized criminal groups and terrorist networks. In the case of the latter (the structure of the kind of networks this chapter is concerned with, as opposed to lower-level, "normal" criminals), both organized criminal networks and terrorist groups tend to be closely knit, which serves to frustrate law enforcement efforts. The closed structure of both criminal and terrorist networks often leads to a very effective cell structure, where communication is one-way and limited knowledge is only shared with trusted contacts, in order to minimize the risk of disruption by law enforcement agencies. Working with outsiders poses a risk, but organized criminals and terrorists use similar methods to manage such risks, for example by using intermediaries, taking the advice of referees, or working only with people who share their backgrounds. Such tried-and-tested methods make law enforcement opportunities for infiltration,

both in terms of covert human intelligence sources and undercover officers, more difficult.

While organized criminals often tend to be oriented along such lines of similar background, primarily in terms of family, ethnicity, or linguistic background, terrorist groups often have a further criterion—namely, complete commitment to the cause, as highlighted earlier. This makes it extremely difficult for the law enforcement community to infiltrate these groups even if some sympathy for their cause can be feigned. On the other hand, infiltration in the opposite direction has, traditionally, also been the case, with organized criminal groups finding it easier to infiltrate law enforcement agencies and corrupting officials than their terrorist “cousins” can. Part of this is due to the power of money, with greed being a more dominating factor than sympathy for the cause in many circumstances, particularly for the “noncommitted.” In addition, vetting and security clearance checks have historically focused more on terrorist links than links to the organized criminal fraternity. It must be noted, however, that terrorists are picking up some of the tricks of the trade and learning from the experiences of the organized criminal networks in terms of corrupting officials for their own purposes. In addition, the more the distinction is blurred and terrorist networks are transformed into criminal enterprises, the potential for corruption is increased, as are the possibilities of law enforcement infiltration. It should be stressed here, however, that while corruption is not essential for organized crime to exist, it has undermined much of the law enforcement effort against such crime worldwide.

The second structural difficulty that makes disruption of terrorism and organized criminal networks difficult is that law enforcement agencies in these areas have traditionally been operating in two separate “silos.” This has led to a range of challenges, some of which are only recently being addressed. Between these silos there have been different mind-sets and separate processes that have led to a reluctance to share intelligence or effectively work to bridge the divide. The cultural differences between the two silos remain, which at times have had disastrous consequences where serious criminals and terrorists have not been stopped in time. The silos work in similar (albeit separate) ways, with greater attempts at trying to *understand* the terrorists and serious criminals by proactive and intelligence-led policing, whereas investigation of “normal” crimes (even murders) usually involves more reactive policing.

The different responses in combating organized crime and terrorism are also rooted in law. This has led to the need to have separate processes that, by virtue of being enshrined in law, often have very little overlap. Law enforcement agencies set up to combat organized crime have thus had a

very different legal jurisdiction from those focusing on terrorism. At times this reluctance to encroach on the other's territory has led to serious failing, where both criminals and terrorists have slipped through the net.

There is some rationale behind such separation, however, from a historic perspective. The key challenge of not wanting to share sensitive intelligence stems from the fact that in many cases police officers dealing with crime have lower security clearance than their law enforcement colleagues dealing primarily with terrorism. Keeping the two apart, therefore, minimizes the potential for compromise, as the less-cleared officers dealing with crime are considered more susceptible to bribery or other forms of corruption. In addition, the very different methods employed against terrorists and against organized criminals have been possible without infringing too much on human rights.

There are, of course, instances where the two disparate law enforcement responses have traditionally converged, and relied upon the expertise of the other, and this is often seen in terms of targeting the finances of organized crime groups and terrorist groups. The lessons learned from this collaborative working may well serve as a blueprint for future cooperation. Law enforcement agencies dealing with organized criminal networks have a long and distinguished record of intelligence-led investigations. This is particularly true in terms of tracing the finances of such groups.

In terms of serious and organized criminality, policing has been successful in targeting the whole range of criminal finances, from criminal funding to the transfer and laundering of profits. It is also an area where, traditionally, antiterrorist law enforcement has cooperated with criminal law enforcement combating serious and organized crime as mentioned earlier.

In some countries, this cooperation has led to a more concerted "joint" approach, such as the multiagency Terrorist Finance Unit in the United Kingdom, which (though housed in the National Crime Agency) combines the law enforcement expertise from both sides of the divide, as well as from the private sector. The importance of multiagency coordination in this field cannot be underestimated, and is recognized by such multilateral institutions as the European Union and the United Nations. In some countries, new and amended legislation provides for proceeds of crime and money laundering legislation to be extended to terrorist offences, particularly in terms of freezing assets. Besides the usual means of prevention and suppression of terrorism, a recent change in Italian law, for example, rules that those asset seizure measures used in the fight against the mafia can also be applied to international terrorism,¹² as is the case with the antiterrorism acts and proceeds of crime legislation in the United Kingdom.

Serious and organized criminality and international terrorism do not respect international borders or agreements restricting or enabling the movement of goods and people between countries. Combating the financing of these two phenomena, therefore, requires collective and coordinated international action. The main problem with this has been the reluctance to share intelligence and operational resources between countries or allow foreign agents to operate within each other's country. The international law enforcement liaison officer networks, which are in many respects in their infancy although long-established in terms of time, may be a possible solution to sharing both information and to enable joint operational coordination.

In order for these liaison networks to function successfully in denying organized crime and terrorism of their much-needed money, a three-tier approach may be necessary. First, there needs to be the capability of imposing *sanctions* in a foreign country, such as cutting off the money flows to individual criminals and terrorists as well as their groups. Second, international *standards* are necessary to stop such illegal financing. This may relate to money laundering regulations, where countries can assist each other with "best practices" and training. Finally, the liaison officers are in an excellent position to facilitate *technical assistance* to help countries develop the measures and infrastructure necessary to root out the financing of terrorism and organized crime. Multilateral institutions for cooperation, such as Europol and Interpol, have combined legal jurisdictions for both terrorism and organized crime, and have been instrumental in getting member countries to cooperate and share intelligence and operational capabilities.

In many countries, such law enforcement cooperation has already led to a consensus that targeting the finances of both organized criminals and terrorists may be the best way to disrupt their activities. This conclusion has been reached as the upper tiers of such networks—the leaders, "mafia dons," and planners—rarely put themselves in the path of law enforcement and keep out of the limelight, merely reaping the profits of the illegal activities that their subordinates commit. Traditional law enforcement, whether reactive or proactive, has failed to reduce the harm caused by such groups, as it has targeted the lower ranks. However, by targeting the finances directly, the terrorists and organized criminals are struck where they feel the impact the most. The need for funding is the main link between the two concepts, and this is the "weakness" needed in combating both. The distinction may therefore be irrelevant for successfully disrupting their activities and reducing the harm they cause. The sooner the international law enforcement community realizes that organized criminal

networks and terrorist groups use each other for financial reasons, the sooner problems of cooperation may be ironed out.

The G7 established the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 1989 as an independent body with the explicit aim of examining the trends and techniques of money laundering, and it was furthermore tasked to make recommendations on how to combat it. The recommendations were originally not binding on states, but many countries incorporated these into national legislation, thus making them obligatory. While the FATF and its recommendations have been criticized in some quarters (notably in the U.S. media), primarily on human rights and privacy grounds, its recommendations continue to provide an anti-money laundering framework. In 2001, the FATF mandate was expanded to include the monitoring of activities set up by the member states to prevent and combat the financing of terrorism.

Legislation aimed at targeting the finances of both terrorism and organized criminals, whether multilateral such as the FATF or domestically like the USA PATRIOT Act (or Executive Order 13224, providing for the freezing of assets) or the Proceeds of Crime Act in the United Kingdom, all have one major failing. Both organized criminal networks (and in particular those that traffic their goods across international borders) and terrorist organizations rely heavily on informal banking systems such as the *hawala* or Black Market Peso Exchange, which are unregulated networks enabling money to move between countries without leaving any tracks.¹³ Once the proceeds of crime, or financing for it, enter the legitimate banking system (by purchase of airline tickets, goods, or real estate), there is an opportunity to track it and thus target the perpetrators indirectly. It is at this point where money laundering and financial industry regulators, as described above, are of vital importance in highlighting when funds may be from illegitimate sources, such as the proceeds of crime or money being laundered.

Joint working is also further complicated by differing priorities, especially noticeable between counterterrorism and counternarcotics work. Even in Afghanistan, which may be one of the most obvious contemporary examples of combined terrorism and organized crime, the U.S.-led efforts are hampered by such competing priorities. While the allied governments have pledged support for counternarcotics initiatives, much of the hardware needed (including helicopters) is controlled by the military, who needs to prioritize their counterterrorist undertakings. Cooperation regarding counternarcotics strangely finds itself stuck *between* organized crime and terrorism on the linear perspective raised above, with clashing priorities. With relation to Afghanistan, the Joint Narcotics Analysis Center, which draws together a range of British and American military and law

enforcement agencies, including intelligence agencies, may be a step in the right direction.

Concluding Thoughts

We have seen in this chapter that organized criminal networks permeate every section of society throughout the world. The harm they cause to society is immense, and while organized crime may not play to the media's and public's imagination as much as terrorism, it may be as significant. In addition, the two phenomena are at times so similar as to defy distinction, and this may be exploited by law enforcement agencies that have traditionally been distinct entities, singing from different hymn sheets. Increased operational cooperation and intelligence sharing may be vital to combat these banes of the modern international arena. The similarities and direct links between organized criminal networks and terrorism remain important areas for research on an academic level and as intelligence gaps that need filling on a practical level. High-level agreements to cooperate—such as the joint meetings by the G7's so-called Group of Lyon (organized crime) and Group of Rome (terrorism), which have developed a joint action plan to combat terrorism—continue to be important steps in realizing the links between organized crime and terrorism. Lower-level collaborations between law enforcement agencies themselves also continue to be important, but are sometimes hampered by bureaucracy.

Moving organized crime and terrorism away from the middle of the linear interpretative spectrum, toward dealing with both as crimes (albeit rather different than street-level crime), may not only offer scope and opportunity for further cooperation and joint working between law enforcement agencies (both within countries as well as between them), but it may also reduce the harm caused by organized criminal networks. This has been attempted historically, with ambiguous success. While it has not solved all the problems, the decision to let the police take over from the military as the main law enforcement body in Northern Ireland during the early 1970s consciously moved many acts associated with “the Troubles” away from being war to being criminal issues. Terrorists (and insurgents who use terrorism) can sometimes muster local support, but with few exceptions organized crime usually cannot.

As with terrorism, learning to understand how organized criminals operate, and how to best disrupt their activities, can only be achieved with cooperation and intelligence sharing on a practical level, and by not heightening their stature in conceptual terms. The “organized crime” label can diminish a terror group's “legitimacy” among its support base, as was

seen with the Ulster Defence Force (UDF) in Northern Ireland, after the Cook Report showed that they were primarily criminal thugs. Although terrorists rarely call themselves “terrorists,” other terms are used to legitimize them and heighten their status. If describing them as mere criminals results in their losing this legitimizing self-justification, and if they rely on fear *sine qua non*, they also lose their impact on the societies within which they operate. However, law enforcement can of course take advantage of public fear of terrorism to heighten security and therefore more successfully target such groups and individuals. Likewise, although the public perception of organized criminal networks may be inadvertently heightened if they are considered as terrorist groups (to be feared), law enforcement efforts can also capitalize on such mislabeling. If organized criminals perceive themselves as more than just profit-seeking gangs, they are more likely to seek attention for their violent and criminal acts than traditional organized criminals (with their codes of silence, such as the Mafia’s *omertà*). This presents opportunities for law enforcement agencies to target them, or at least obtain leads into their organization that can be exploited by a range of techniques including covert human intelligence.

Where there are direct crossovers between terrorists and organized criminals, such as the use of the same professionals (as highlighted above), law enforcement is presented with new opportunities that can be exploited in order to disrupt such networks. Any chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and law enforcement efforts could be focused on the points where the cell structure of both organized criminals and terrorists are undermined by relying more on outsiders. As organized criminals and terrorist networks continue to overlap, and as the distinction may inevitably blur to the point of the two being inextricably linked, law enforcement agencies around the world must be prepared to accept that jurisdictions may also need to overlap, and that working in silos may not be the most effective way of combating the most serious criminals (including terrorists) today. It remains to be seen whether law enforcement and intelligence officers on both sides of the divide can accept this challenge and develop working methods of combating organized crime and terrorism in the 21st century.

Acknowledgments

Friends and colleagues, new and old, have as usual been instrumental in writing this chapter. In the process friends have been found and friends have been lost; I could not have done it without them. This chapter is dedicated to my children, Lex and Zelda.

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9. *The Funding of International Islamic Terrorism* (Rome: Guardia di Finanza, 2nd Department–Analysis Unit, 2002), 133.
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Part II: Tactical and Operational Dimensions

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The Contemporary Challenges of Counterterrorism Intelligence

Jennifer E. Sims

THIRTEEN YEARS AFTER U.S. INTELLIGENCE FAILED TO warn of Al Qaeda's plan to attack the United States on 9/11, its role in the fight against transnational terrorism has brought mixed results. On the positive side, intelligence support to warfighters in Afghanistan proved crucial to knocking the Taliban from power, bleeding Al Qaeda, and destroying the jihadists' safe haven there. Without high-fidelity intelligence, Osama Bin Laden, Al Qaeda's mastermind, could not have been hunted down and killed. Khalid Sheik Mohammed and most other jihadists implicated in the attacks have been captured or cut down by drones. After the Boston bombing in 2013, U.S. intelligence and domestic law enforcement cooperated to stop the perpetrators and to dispel fears that more attacks might follow. Indeed, so few attacks have occurred on U.S. soil since 9/11 that the public call for better intelligence has been replaced by efforts to curtail domestic intelligence programs and government secrecy more generally.¹ In fact, the successful disruption of terrorist plots has led some to assume that intelligence is sufficient and perhaps even too good. With a renewed sense of security, Americans have dulled, shelved, or destroyed surveillance tools that appeared to put protection of civil liberties more in the hands of Washington's policymakers than in open courtrooms. These efforts even brought extralegal solutions into the mainstream: the *New York Times* argued against prosecuting and for rewarding Edward Snowden, perpetrator of such a massive leak of top secret U.S. surveillance capabilities in 2013

that not even he fully understood what counterterrorism capabilities he was revealing.

On the negative side, however, transnational terrorism seems still on the rise, threatening indiscriminate killing and the panic that goes with it. In August 2011, an Islamist insurgent group in Nigeria called Boko Haram attacked a UN facility in the capital city Abuja, killing 23 and injuring 80—just one among hundreds of attacks for which the group has claimed responsibility over the past decade. In April 2014, the group also kidnapped 276 schoolgirls, spiriting them into the bush where intelligence occasionally glimpsed but could not track them. Across the African continent, another Islamist insurgent group called al-Shabaab sent a team of gunmen into a mall in Nairobi, Kenya, in an attack that resulted in hundreds of casualties, including more than 60 deaths. This group, based in Somalia, has been responsible for an increasing number of terrorist attacks since 2007 throughout East Africa.

Meanwhile the Islamic State in the Levant (ISIL)—one of many terrorist groups operating in Syria and Iraq—captured by force a large swath of territory in the region, and has also captured Western civilians and held them for ransom. In 2014, ISIL began beheading selected captives in retaliation for U.S. air strikes in Iraq and Syria. ISIL posted footage of the atrocities, including narration by the British-accented executioner, on YouTube. A few weeks later, Australian officials discovered ISIL plots to conduct civilian beheadings as “demonstration killings” to show the group’s capacity to execute operations outside the Middle East. Indeed, the U.S. Army Threat Integration Center disclosed in October 2014 that Islamist militants were planning to use social media sites and other open sources to “find the addresses of (US) service members, show up [at their homes] and slaughter them.”² Unlike government officials who plead for metadata to track terrorists, raising Americans’ concerns for their privacy, terrorists have all they need to kill Americans and their families using open sources online. Officials have revealed that perhaps as many as 300 Americans have been fighting alongside ISIL terrorists and could return home. ISIL supporters have taken photos of themselves at tourist sites in the United States, including the White House, and posted them on Twitter with the caption “We are in your state, We are in your cities, We are in your streets.”³

Given the importance of intelligence support to counterterrorism, the increasing power and brutality of terrorists, and democratic concerns about protection of civil liberties, the foregoing balance sheet raises three critical questions: First, has the recent tolerance for leaks of U.S. intelligence capabilities and the rollback of surveillance left us more vulnerable

than we should be against terrorist attacks at home? Second, has intelligence support for drone attacks, manhunts, and assassinations of terrorist ringleaders been worth the cost in lost public support for the fight? Third, did the 2004 reorganization of the intelligence community help or hurt the effectiveness of U.S. intelligence operations, and should those reforms be revisited?⁴ These questions are crucial to effective counterterrorism strategies, and they are not easy to answer. Vivid loss of civilian lives through gruesome on-screen executions are one kind of serious threat, but less vivid jeopardy to civil liberties in a hypersurveillance state is dangerous too.

To answer these questions it is important not to fall into the trap of judging U.S. intelligence performance by organizational measures, such as the size of intelligence agencies, the number of employees with top secret clearances and their turnover rates, or even data on intelligence sharing inside the intelligence community. Instead, we need to know what makes for winning intelligence against terrorists, compare current practices to it, and recommend improvements wherever the fit is imperfect. Any organizational restructuring should flow from performance requirements, not the other way around.⁵ This chapter will, therefore, focus less on critiques of the agencies conducting counterterrorist intelligence operations than on broader requirements and future challenges. It begins with a discussion of what history can tell us about the core features of past counterintelligence missions that have been successful against transnational groups. It then discusses the new features of the modern conflict that are changing the nature of the tradecraft needed to defeat terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and the ISIL (or Islamic State). A key premise of the discussion is that one cannot evaluate an intelligence effort without identifying the nature of the competition, including the adversaries and their strategies. This is because intelligence, at its core, is less about getting facts right or wrong than providing competitive advantages in foresight and situational awareness to decision makers.⁶

Some Things Old . . .

Despite occasional suggestions to the contrary, the intelligence challenge posed by a global network of terrorists—one that seeps across state boundaries for the purpose of sabotage and disruption—is not all that new.⁷ Following the French Revolution—and especially after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo—France became the central hub for a network of frustrated revolutionaries and anarchists. As a result, nascent French security services built *cabinets noirs* focused on intercepting domestic mail. With

the police in the lead, France successfully tracked anarchists and radicals through expanded police powers.⁸ In contrast, the elaborate intelligence institutions of the Dual Monarchy of Austria–Hungary were famously challenged by Serb nationalists later in the century; their ineffectual counterterrorist efforts were punctuated by the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand.⁹

Some years later, intelligence-gathering tools were used by the left against monarchists in Russia. After the Bolshevik revolution, Lenin faced a counterrevolutionary movement dedicated to reversing what he and his cohorts had accomplished. The government's enemies were particularly worrisome because they were indistinguishable from Bolshevik loyalists. "Now the enemy is here, in Petrograd, at our very hearts," said Felix Dzerzhinsky, Lenin's chief spy and the founder of the Cheka (the Soviet Secret Police).¹⁰ The Cheka proceeded to terrorize the recalcitrant monarchists so effectively that they fled, establishing a network and operatives throughout Europe. The organization and methods that Dzerzhinsky created to locate, dupe, and eventually defeat them stood, for most of the twentieth century, as one of the most successful transnational counterintelligence endeavors ever undertaken.¹¹ Called simply the Trust, its techniques became an example—albeit an extreme one—for post–World War II counterintelligence chiefs seeking to defeat international communism, another transnational 20th-century threat.¹² For this reason, and because it is still influential in modern counterintelligence practice, the Trust is worth considering in greater detail.

The Trust

This counterintelligence operation began in 1921 and ended about a year and a half after the entrapment and death of Sidney Reilly in late 1925. Reilly was a British citizen who, since at least 1918, had associated with officers of the British Secret Intelligence Service and conceived of himself as a master spy and anti-Bolshevik conspirator.¹³ During this time, the Cheka carefully infiltrated the White Russian émigré community in Europe, including the Supreme Monarchist Council and the Russian Combined Services Union. As it did so, it spread the fabrication that a counterrevolutionary organization called the Trust was working underground to overthrow the Bolsheviks. In this way it not only uncovered the monarchist network but lured its ringleaders to their deaths.

There were four keys to the Trust's success against the transnational network of monarchists: double agents, doubled logistics, deception, and data fusion. According to Jeffrey Richelson:

Through the Trust, the Cheka and its successors were able to thoroughly penetrate the main White Guard émigré groups and identify their sympathizers in Russia, the Baltic states, Poland, Britain and France. Estonian and Polish diplomats even permitted the Trust to send its messages via their diplomatic bags. . . . The émigrés were assured that the best chance of achieving their goals was to let the Trust operate quietly to undermine the Soviet regime. It was also employed to feed false information to British and Polish intelligence and to encourage them to send agents to attempt to subvert the Bolsheviks. The Trust also siphoned funds from White émigrés, funds that might have been used to support insurrections. Additionally, it was employed to expose and entrap the remaining anti-Soviet underground.¹⁴

By preempting the monarchists' operations and going after them in their sanctuaries, the Cheka avoided being thrown on the defensive. The techniques employed, however, were brutal. Reilly, like many of the captured operatives before him, was harshly interrogated, forced to reveal details of the intelligence and counterintelligence capabilities of Moscow's adversaries, and ultimately murdered. Obviously, the Trust offered a highly controversial model for modern democratic states attempting to defeat transnational, ideologically driven networks.

Countering Soviet Interwar Espionage

Of course, democracies had their own counterintelligence successes against transnational adversaries during the 20th century. The British developed a highly intrusive counterespionage effort that weeded Soviet agents—including some born and raised in Britain—out of British party politics during the period between the two world wars.¹⁵ Domestic intelligence, spearheaded by MI5, ultimately disrupted Soviet cells and exposed their links to a network of communist operatives within many democracies—a wide and tightly controlled web that became apparent only gradually.

The key to MI5's success was data fusion: domestic signals intelligence (SIGINT) combined with human reporting (HUMINT) and defensive counterintelligence operations, such as surveillance of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). Nigel West describes the importance of data sharing in detail in his comprehensive book on the subject:

Once the address from which the illicit transmitter had been operating . . . had been ascertained, the sole occupier was watched, and his identity established . . . MI5's B3 watchers, led by Harry Hunter, noted that he regularly met Alice Holland, another CPGB [Communist Party of Great Britain]

member who was also placed under surveillance. Neither realized that their mail and telephones were being intercepted, nor that they were followed wherever they went. Anyone they met was also watched, and over a period of months MI5 was able to build a comprehensive picture of the CPGB's underground network . . . an apparatus that existed *sub rosa* and in parallel to the overt Party. . . . MI5's task was to infiltrate the clandestine organization, identify its membership, monitor its activities and assess the degree to which it was engaged in sedition or espionage. The undertaking was of enormous sensitivity.¹⁶

West's story is about the successful defense of a liberal democracy using illiberal means—albeit, means far less offensive than those employed by the Trust, which massacred about 200,000 people in defense of Bolshevism. Other democracies have, however, gone further than the British did in this case. For example, France at least temporarily defeated terrorist insurgents during the Battle of Algiers by demonstrating a capacity for ruthlessness, including torture, for intelligence ends.¹⁷ And the British have apparently used their own agents as pawns or bait—even allowing them to torture and be tortured in order to gain intelligence on the evolving conflict in Northern Ireland.¹⁸ Victors in battles with clandestine networks, including democracies, have used lying, fabrication, and intrusive domestic methods to corral, arrest, and finish off their adversaries. But in doing so, they have sometimes put their own societies—including the fabric of morals, culture, and respect for individuals on which they are based—at risk in other ways. Democracies have successfully fought transnational groups, but, in doing so, they have had to balance gains against their adversaries against losses to their own cultural and political integrity.

Implications and Lessons Learned?

Indeed, these and other historical examples offer lessons for modern counterterrorist intelligence operations, four of which are worth noting here. First, past successes against transnational groups have required close cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence. When intragovernmental cooperation has been poor or bureaucracies highly competitive, success has been elusive at best.¹⁹ Second, communications have often been the Achilles' heel of transnational operations, making SIGINT and decryption at least as important as HUMINT for tactical counterintelligence. Third, the intrusive measures taken during the periods of highest threat have generally been scaled back after threats have subsided. In democracies in particular, the need to balance intrusiveness with public

accountability in domestic counterintelligence operations has proven to be a competitive disadvantage—one that smart adversaries have exploited.

This vulnerability is vexing because it is so critically tied to the way of life democracies are defending. Yet, it may also be one reason the United States in its current counterterrorism endeavors has not drawn as bright a line as some critics would like in separating cruel, degrading, and inhumane treatment from acceptable intelligence-gathering practices. Proponents of a fuzzy line note that, given the stakes involved, it may be important to keep some of the more extreme options open—such as secret detentions, renditions, and perhaps even harsh interrogations bordering on torture—because they intimidate and deter.

However, others note that terrorists seek to sway public opinion for strategic gain, and fuzzy lines can be used to mischaracterize American intentions. Insofar as defeating transnational networks requires cooperation with other governments, one country's use or threatened use of extreme methods can implicate all of its partners, jeopardize important intelligence exchanges, and get in the way of good relations with domestic communities whose cooperation is needed to fight domestic terror. Baltasar Garzon, a well-known investigative magistrate in Spain, has argued forcefully for the shutting down of the U.S. terrorist detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, calling it "an insult to countries that respect laws" and a place that "delegitimizes us" and that "needs to disappear immediately."²⁰ Britain's attorney general Lord Goldsmith and Italy's prominent jurist Armando Spataro have made similar statements.²¹

Herein lies the fourth lesson and central conundrum for liberal democracies fighting global terrorist networks: although the mission is not new, past models for success have often involved bloody or politically offensive intelligence practices.²² Yet, we entered the post-Cold War era optimistic that the United States could reasonably promote democracy and the rule of law worldwide. Do the illiberal requirements of fighting terror inevitably sabotage this larger vision of helping societies embrace individual rights, freedoms, and self-determination? Or is it possible to render the intelligence aspects of fighting terror part of the solution to the conundrum itself?

While the issues involved in reconciling ethics, law, democratic culture, and counterterrorism cannot be fully explored in depth in this chapter, it is worth noting that neither the United States nor most of its allies wish to win the conflict at the expense of healthy civil societies; yet they are tempted to do so because these methods have seemed to work in the past and the consequences of failure seem so high.²³ The question that will be explored at least minimally in this chapter is whether some of the

ingredients of these past successes can be combined with something new, in strategy or in intelligence practice, that can make what is likely to be a protracted war a successful and tolerable one as well.

... Some Things New

The modern conflict with terrorism, including intelligence operations, involves five aspects that suggest some departures from past intelligence practices may not only be possible but necessary. These five aspects will affect counterterrorism operations in the future and should, therefore, be considered when building today's intelligence architecture. They include the information revolution; the standardization of intelligence practices; the changing nature of warfare; the increasing role of the private sector in espionage, surveillance, and intelligence analysis; and, perhaps most important, the nature of the modern terrorist adversary.²⁴ The implications of these developments for intelligence operations generally, and counterterrorism operations in particular, are potentially profound and are likely to adjust—at least at the margins but possibly to the core—the balance that past counterintelligence efforts have struck between data fusion, state intrusiveness, and civil liberties.

The Information Revolution

Tired as the phrase is, the information revolution is real, ongoing, and deeply affecting international politics, including the operations of transnational terrorists. It concerns more than the increased capacity of computers and software, which have in turn increased the volume and speed of communication. It is as much about individual access both to ideas and to worldwide audiences. With the advent and growth of the Internet, people now have the opportunity to acquire “actionable” knowledge, to interact across international boundaries, and to make choices based on their personal research much more quickly than in the past. For example, the terrorists who attacked Sharm-el Sheikh and London during 2005, as well as in Boston in 2013, found training available electronically. Terrorists have been quick not only to adopt the latest communications technologies, such as cell phones, but also to exploit the highly competitive market by finding vendors willing to sell to purchasers that refuse to give their names.²⁵ Advances in robotics, and especially remote-controlled aerial platforms equipped with surveillance and geo-location sensors, have made drone attacks possible for anyone with access to commercial suppliers and automated decision software.

Given the ease with which terrorists assimilate new technologies into their organizations, counterterrorism officials must also anticipate next steps and prevent them. For example, the threat of cyberterrorism, which received some attention prior to 9/11, has been on the rise and will worsen as governments increasingly rely on databases of terrorists and inferencing engines to sort data. The greatest terrorist threat may not, however, ride on the apocalyptic scenarios of Internet collapse; transnational organizations such as Al Qaeda probably rely too much on the Internet for logistical purposes to plot its collapse.²⁶ Rather, terrorists are more likely to use the Internet as an adjunct to terror in its more traditional form. They may penetrate databases to gain visas and tamper with security systems and even electrical grids for instrumental purposes known in military jargon as “preparation of the battlefield.” Scott Borg, the director and chief economist of the U.S. Cyber Consequences Unit, a nonprofit organization that advises the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, reportedly worries principally about Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition systems.²⁷

Control systems are a particular worry, because these are the computer systems that manage physical processes. They open and shut the valves, adjust the temperatures, throw the switches, regulate the pressures. . . . Think of the control systems for chemical plants, railway lines, or manufacturing facilities. Shutting these systems down is a nuisance. Causing them to do the wrong thing at the wrong time is much worse.²⁸

Vulnerabilities to cyberterrorism arise as industries and governments automate their operations, acquiring low-cost products for their encryption and information-processing needs. In the first instance, this demand generates an ever-growing market for more data-processing tools available to the public and private sectors.

As James Gosler of Sandia Labs has shown, this rising demand has created new and sometimes surprisingly complex vulnerabilities in modern, industrial economies.²⁹ Advanced technology firms have been hiring more foreign companies to assist in creating components for complex information systems. Years ago, national security experts saw this coming. One commented on a computer part sent to him by a friend: “On the back was written: ‘This part was made in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, China, Mexico, Germany, the U.S., Thailand, Canada and Japan.’”³⁰ There is little “made in America” about the nation’s critical infrastructure. The distributed nature of the information industries, a by-product of globalization, has thus created new avenues for malicious tampering or “sleeper” sabotage of critical infrastructure.³¹ Put simply, commercial technology

may be a Trojan horse—a welcome gift bearing unwelcome surprises. The best way to counter such sleeper technologies may be to embed countermeasures in critical systems that can identify the sleeper technologies before, or as, they act.

In any case, a corollary to the new intimacy between the individual and the state is the enhanced role individuals play in making national news. As Thomas Friedman has noted, one feature of globalization is that we are all now broadcasters.³² The national media find themselves chasing stories first revealed by local reporters or Internet bloggers. Not only can a cartoon published in the Netherlands or a Koran mishandled at Guantanamo offend Muslims in Turkey, Pakistan, or Indonesia within hours or minutes, but the information received is often laced with gossip and conspiracy theories. Reactions to the distorted picture can in turn quickly affect decision making back in Washington or among Al Qaeda's central leaders. Whether stories are apocryphal or not, they spread. This phenomenon underscores the importance of open source intelligence for both intelligence and counterintelligence purposes.³³ Deception—a technique of intelligence masters of the past—can become a much more widely used instrument today. In the hands of terrorists, deception creates at the very least more “noise” for counterterrorism analysts to sift through; at worst, it could mask tomorrow's strategic surprise.

For this and other reasons, it is not clear that an increasingly bloated information environment improves international discourse or that more connected citizens make decisions any more wisely than their less-connected forbearers. In fact, research suggests that people tend to use their improved access to information, and the Internet in particular, less for learning than for finding and interacting with those who share similar biases and viewpoints.³⁴ In any case, the information revolution would seem to render individuals and the civil societies they populate more empowered in relation to their governors, for better or for worse. This circumstance does not suggest that state-run intelligence systems have been eclipsed by the information revolution; it suggests only that they must adjust to the information environment and, in particular, the new ways in which competitors, adversaries, and potential nongovernmental allies are organizing.

Social Organization, Politics, and the Standardization of Intelligence Operations

Changes in the information environment affect social organizing and all forms of political competition—often in surprising ways. In the realm of national security policy and terrorism in particular, the most discussed effects have been the rise of networked organizations that rely on distributed

decision making and semi-independent cells for flexible operations, clustering, and “swarming.”³⁵

Sociologists have developed a literature that describes these new organizational modalities in some detail—a body of work that can only be summarized in the briefest terms here. Networks rely on distributed decision making and semi-independent cells for flexible and compartmented operations. In their modern form, these cells emerge and connect particularly efficiently. The Internet enables extremists to find each other quickly and within these “clusters” reinforce each other’s views. “Swarms” can be thought of as clusters on the move—or, more accurately, clusters forming on the move. A swarm resists preplanning; instead, it simply emerges as a result of individualized communications.³⁶ Howard Reingold, author of *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*, has called the phenomenon (less simply but perhaps more accurately), “cybernegotiated public flocking behavior.”³⁷ What is important about swarming for intelligence and counterterrorism is its sociological substructure. Collective action comes about quickly as a result of very rapid decision making by a gradually forming, self-identifying group that may melt as fast as it forms.

Once recognized, swarming can be adopted as a deliberate technique and used for operations in which the speed of decision making is more important than security. The CIA has allegedly used swarming techniques when conducting renditions (apprehending a subject on foreign soil and bringing him to face justice in the United States or a third country). After the imam Hassan Mustafa Osama Nasr was seized as he walked to his mosque on February 17, 2003, the Italian police identified the suspected kidnappers by examining all cell phones in use near the abduction, and then tracing the web of calls placed. The forensics used by the police helped them to identify a form of swarming behavior among 13 alleged CIA officers, but the kidnapping was so quickly accomplished that the technique was recognized only after the imam had disappeared.³⁸ If this had been a terrorist attack, the bomb would have already gone off.

In the modern age of terrorism, swarming, clustering, and networking reflect how the enemy can and will behave; they will be making decisions on the move. The CIA’s Italian operation, though a possible example of counterterrorist swarming, nonetheless shows how tactical defense can fail if employing traditional law enforcement techniques, whether among special operations forces or within civil societies threatened by attack. It illustrates the tactical challenge modern operations pose for those trying to defeat terrorism before it occurs.³⁹

The second, more political effect of the information revolution has been what might be termed the “standardization” of intelligence operations

alluded to above. As intelligence services increasingly exploit open source information available on the Internet, share sources and methods, and conduct joint operations, the more they are learning from each other and the greater the stakes they have in how each other performs.

The popularization of the intelligence business began with the end of the Cold War and picked up momentum in the early 1990s as budget pressures led the U.S. intelligence community to disclose more of what it did to a skeptical Congress and the public. The National Reconnaissance Office was formally acknowledged; the existence of aerial surveillance and early satellite imagery programs was disclosed; and professionals from once-secretive agencies granted authorized interviews to historians such as James Bamford, Christopher Andrew, and Amy Zegart, who wrote detailed histories.⁴⁰ It was not just declassified information on past intelligence activity and terminology that became available, but also musings on best practices derived both from the historical record and from theoretical work. By the end of the 1990s, an international spy museum had even opened in Washington, D.C. By 2001, midcareer intelligence officers pursuing master's-level degrees were expressing surprise at the quality and breadth of material available to the public, including foreigners, and covered in unclassified intelligence classes at the graduate level.⁴¹ The massive leaks by U.S. intelligence community insiders—such as Bradley (Chelsea) Manning and especially Edward Snowden—have exposed details of sources and methods that are rapidly analyzed and distributed worldwide.

On the one hand, growing public awareness of the role intelligence has played is arguably a good thing; terrorists and criminals should not be the only ones using modern communications to learn from each other. Intelligence is now part of local and state governance as well as national politics, it affects citizens' daily lives, and it is practiced by businesses that train their employees in skills very similar to those employed by national intelligence officers in order to keep industrial secrets safe, particularly from cyber attacks. Intelligence is, in short, no longer an obscure business. But, on the other hand, its greater public visibility leads to legitimate concerns about protecting sources and methods and the proper limits to public dialogue on intelligence matters, including the proper relationship among scholars, historians, and intelligence practitioners.

The emergence of intelligence as a discipline of study will likely improve and standardize its practice among organized intelligence services, businesses, and, unfortunately, criminal organizations. The study of intelligence, including theoretical work that develops rigorous metrics for success, offers a historical literature about lessons learned that could soon surpass that available within the U.S. government. The question is not

whether this process is happening or can be stopped, but which intelligence providers will learn—and learn faster—from it. If counterintelligence officials focus on leaks from formal intelligence institutions to the public at the expense of exploiting the learning and innovation being transferred within the private sector itself, they may find themselves at a competitive disadvantage in the future. This is not just because foreigners are reading books on intelligence and taking university courses; it is because the new intelligence scholarship is building on lessons from business intelligence and the criminal record as much as from government and, in some cases, deriving unique insights as a result.

The Role of the Private Sector and the Changing Nature of Warfare

The foregoing discussion has suggested that private sector developments have already had a profound effect on how modern intelligence services operate. Firms specializing in advanced technologies have brought powerful data management and processing tools—including extraordinarily strong encryption—to individuals worldwide at a steadily diminishing cost. And, as discussed briefly above, as the capacity of individuals to learn from and report to others has increased, so have the vulnerabilities of complex information systems designed and built by a highly distributed information industry.

But the impact of the private sector on modern intelligence and counterterrorism extends much more broadly and deeply than this. Private sector surveillance has increased sharply as owners of information—such as cell phone purchasers, patients in hospitals, or online shoppers—cede their control of it in order to increase the efficiency and quality of their transactions. Commercial holders may then combine what they know into databases that they can sell for a profit or share for a larger public good. As citizens adjusted to the benefits of this private sector data sharing, they became inured or perhaps complacent with the notion that industry also benefited from their largesse—that is, until Edward Snowden's leaks revealed the extent of the private sector's cooperation with government. For large data aggregators, the Snowden revelations risked not just exposure of side agreements made with states, but also that the public would wake up to the dangers of having personal information aggregated and analyzed on the Web and, by demanding restrictions on sharing, bring down the giant content providers whose business models require information to be free to be profitable.⁴²

The complacent public attitude toward privacy on the Web has been most striking in the United States. American political culture has long

been heavily seasoned with distrust of the federal government and distaste for its intrusion in private matters;⁴³ yet Americans, so instinctively entrepreneurial and receptive to new technologies, have been taking advantage of the speed and scope of individual transactions made possible by the Internet. U.S. consumers have been incrementally forfeiting their privacy for small but copious goods: quick purchases on eBay, the accumulation of airline miles, and tailored reading lists from Amazon.com. Reading the fine print of commercial contracts have occasionally triggered worries, but the consequences of giving up one's information have long seemed more remote than the gains achieved through faster decision making. Time is money; people are choosing to make more by selling bits of themselves.

Willingness to give up digital content for free has permitted Google, for example, to make a fortune from advertisers who buy space based on the targeting information Google is able to supply from its users. In an analysis of Google's business model, one commentator put it succinctly: "We are its product; our information is its asset base."⁴⁴

Yet, if this were just a profit-driven phenomenon, the accumulation of data in the hands of industrial titans would mean little beyond the marketplace. In fact, the larger push toward data aggregation is coming from institutions and corporations responsible for managing risk, such as insurers, and providing for the public's safety, such as law enforcement. Here, the digitization of data has allowed the compiling of such diverse "inputs" as video, still photos, voice recordings, and temperature measurements into consolidated or linked databases that, properly analyzed and mined, can provide complete pictures of private sector environments. Whether looking at human bodies or the "health" of buildings made of concrete and glass, digital databases are permitting individuals at key nodes within civil society to develop the kind of situational awareness within their domains that the military seeks on the battlefield.

Operations centers that once inspired awe among civilians during State Department or Pentagon tours are now springing up in hospitals and skyscrapers. And certain cities are getting the idea that lashing these centers together—along with the surveillance cameras of, say, local delicatessens—could track not only perpetrators of crimes but signal patterns of urban activity that might presage the crimes. After the terrorist bombings in London in 2005, press stories rolled in from across the United States about the wiring of Chicago, Baltimore, and New York City for the purpose of surveillance. In a small town in Vermont, citizens voted to install surveillance cameras on their streets for security reasons; when reporters asked if privacy was a concern, the residents said, in essence, that security was a greater one.

This deepening and broadening of private sector surveillance, together with its public acceptability, has represented a double-edged sword for years—not just since Edward Snowden's revelations of government's measures to keep up. While the prospective reach of national intelligence increased for the purpose of warning and crisis management, the prospective reach of terrorists has been doing so as well: they have at hand a society prewired for their own purposes. In fact, a wired society, especially one with its guard down, is as potentially rich a platform for criminals and terrorists as the commercial airline infrastructure was on 9/11, but the perpetrators do not need to get physically inside U.S. borders to conduct their attacks.

In fact, this circumstance, combined with the public's wariness of federal authorities in the wake of Snowden's leaks, means that the nature of crime and espionage may be changing faster than federal intelligence systems are able to keep up. Terrorists achieve their purposes best when they are able to infiltrate civil society, lying in wait among noncombatants in order to inflict maximum damage. A wired private sector provides a logistical treasure trove for terrorists in the form of accessible databases for identity theft and more rapid and encrypted communications. It also offers new weapons, such as subway systems, ships, and buildings that, increasingly centrally controlled, can become hijacked in a similar manner as planes were on 9/11. Combined with a stated intention of pursuing weapons of mass destruction, such as biological, chemical, and nuclear devices, terrorists are acquiring a disturbing arsenal from which to choose—an arsenal largely constructed, maintained, and improved by the superior powers that they are fighting.

Of course, from a larger perspective, the cumulative effect of all the changes brought about by the spread of technology may be to change the nature of warfare.⁴⁵ But whether these changes turn out to be fundamental or at the margins, their impact is disproportionately felt in the counterterrorism domain. One reason is that counterterrorism hinges on transnational cooperation, which, in turn, is communications dependent. Because of the speed with which terrorists can act, state governments must not only learn from their own police, businesses, and citizenry; they must exchange or barter for information and work with other governments and their local authorities to stop the planning of cross-boundary attacks. In fact, the importance today of such liaison operations to all source collection may be greater than at any time in the past. Of course, for reasons elaborated elsewhere, liaising can never be a substitute for unilateral collection efforts.⁴⁶

A second reason counterterrorism operations are disproportionately affected by technological change is that the larger conflict between Islamists

and Western states is shaped, as Lawrence Freedman has so aptly pointed out, by the contending narratives offered by both sides.⁴⁷ With information spreading fast and free, the winning over of public opinion is vital to preventing the long-term recruitment and cohesion of jihadist cells and to establishing the legitimacy of interventions against states believed to be facilitating them. Third, terrorists—who are preferentially tactical in orientation—can nonetheless plot on a global scale when necessary. Connecting via the Internet, they can regroup and retool. Newer cells can locate and integrate with established ones exploiting local battles, such as in Chechnya or Iraq, for the purposes of hardening and sharpening their operatives. Although this gives modern terrorism the appearance of an international insurgency, it is one that is loosely organized at best, and rides on a splintered criminal underworld that masks sharp divisions among its perpetrators.⁴⁸

This last point warrants emphasis. Even with a more comprehensive discussion of the technological and political environment than is presented here, a sound intelligence strategy against the threat of Islamist terrorism cannot be designed without deep appreciation of what the adversary is and is not. This is because intelligence must, as its primary objective, provide advantages to decision makers operating on the offense, defense, and at all levels of engagement with the adversary. If the principal test of an intelligence service is whether it develops information that helps beat competitors, the pursuit of such an advantage necessarily entails a thorough understanding of the adversary's strategy, tactics, organization, and mind-set—as well, of course, as one's own. Although the nature of the present adversary is covered at length elsewhere in this volume, a somewhat specialized summary is appropriate here. This is because understanding Islamist terrorists' diversity, as well as the divisions in the societies and cultures from which they spring, is the fifth and perhaps most important ingredient of designing an optimized intelligence system against modern terrorism. Such a sophisticated understanding should ideally permeate all levels of national security decision making, including arguably at the level of the foot soldier, because terrorism often rides opportunistically on the back of insurgency. As Max Boot has observed:

To defeat this Islamist insurgency we must be able not only to track down and capture or kill hard-core terrorists but also to carry out civil affairs and information operations to win the "hearts and minds" of the great mass of uncommitted Muslims. We are very good at eliminating top terrorists, once they have been found . . . [but] less skilled . . . at changing the conditions that breed terrorism in the first place.⁴⁹

Islamist Terrorism as an Intelligence Target

A sound intelligence enterprise knows its adversary. Indeed, it identifies the critical decision makers on both sides—those who must be served and those with whom they will engage—and the nature of the competitive game they are playing.⁵⁰ In the post-9/11 world, the strategic dimensions of this question have competed, often unsuccessfully, with the objective of getting intelligence on the next attacks. The reasons for this imbalance are not hard to fathom. Yet, an emphasis on current intelligence at the expense of strategic intelligence puts counterterrorist strategists on the endless defensive, seeking to block a tactical weapon rather than the adversary himself. Imagine if the Cheka had defined its objective as stopping assassinations and sabotage at home rather than rooting out the network that was sponsoring these attacks. To do the latter, Felix Dzerzhinski had to understand his enemy and develop a long-term strategy to defeat him strategically—not just tactically.

As experts on the subject remind us, terrorism is a weapon; its use does little to describe the adversaries who wield it other than that they are ruthless, violence prone, and generally less powerful in traditional terms (arms, money, and legal or institutional resources) than those they are fighting. Even national security experts are prone to lumping terrorists together on the presumption that the tool binds its users into a cohesive set for targeting and planning purposes. For example, many U.S. officials have used—and an otherwise well-informed public has accepted—terms such as the “Global War on Terror.” Prior to the 2003 Iraq War, the implicit assumption that terrorists were allied, and that fighting one required fighting all, seemed to require skeptics to disprove Saddam’s links to Bin Laden’s network rather than the other way around.

If this assumption was ever valid, it is no longer so, and acting on it would be a mistake. As Bruce Hoffman has observed, “we have to reconceive of this as something more akin to a global insurgency or a global counterinsurgency” in which “kill and capture” is no longer the chief measure of success. Instead, Hoffman believes we should gauge success by our ability to disrupt “the cycle of terrorist recruitment and replenishment that we have seen unfold.”⁵¹ Intelligence cannot contribute to this strategic competition unless it can develop a reserve capacity to solve more than the man- and bomb-hunt aspects of the enterprise.

The problem is not just that spurious links may be made between anti-American leaders such as Iraq’s Saddam Hussein and Islamist extremists, but that Islamist extremists will be regarded as more cohesive than they are. Conflation of terrorist plotting with a movement may lead to strategic

error if it throws Al Qaeda's opponents into a defensive crouch while allowing minor criminals, insurgents, and extremist Muslims to augment their prestige by claiming roles grander than they in fact play in global affairs. Remembering the earlier discussion of the importance of strategic narrative, such conflation enhances the enemy and may lead national decision makers to expend excessive intelligence resources on ad hoc actors best left to traditional law enforcement. The trial of Zacarias Moussaoui threw such issues into relief as the prosecution claimed, to the defendant's apparent delight, Moussaoui's complicity in 9/11, while the defense argued the contrary. Bin Laden himself publicly denied any connection between Moussaoui and the 9/11 plotters, which means little except that the issue has propaganda value for the wrong side.

Conclusion: Optimizing U.S. Intelligence for Counterterrorism

For these reasons, constructing strategies for post-9/11 conflicts based on generalizations about the adversary can be misleading and perhaps even dangerous. But they are also necessary and useful when done with care. If, in fact, the competition is at least in part about the future of Islam, then the terrorists may act instrumentally—to trigger U.S. and allied moves that will help the extremists solidify their case against moderate trends and secular regimes in the Muslim world. If this is the case, intelligence analysis and collection efforts that focus principally on how Islamists are likely to shape their next attacks may be describing asymmetric threats while overlooking important asymmetric opportunities that more powerful states have available for outmaneuvering the terrorists at the strategic level.⁵² Intelligence of this tactical kind would then be skewing choices in the adversaries' favor, playing into their hands and making matters worse. Intelligence, done well, must not only avoid falling into such traps, but provide decision makers with the capacity to see the traps coming and spring them ahead of time.

Emphasizing this strategic point is not meant to suggest that tactical intelligence and the decision makers it supports are unimportant. At this level, modern Islamist terrorists operate similarly to transnational threats decades ago—albeit in swarms and clusters that act at much faster speed. To some extent, the techniques that have worked in the past will remain important: human intelligence from infiltration agents, all-source data fusion (phone intercepts and human agents, for example), and collaboration with law enforcement worldwide. The ability of the federal government to conduct double agent and deception operations should be improved and will necessarily have to be coordinated with overseas partners.

However, the changes in the technological landscape outlined above suggest that the most far-reaching tactical challenges may be domestic, because the strategic context for them is so poorly understood. First responders at the state and local level—including private citizens and businesses—may be the first to receive warning and indications of an attack. These individuals, many of whom may have never been exposed to national intelligence institutions or their products, will be first-line collectors as well as decision makers as the crisis unfolds. To ensure collaboration with “first observers” on the street, local and state first responders need to focus as much on building trust within their communities as they do preparing for emergency response—a balance that is seriously impaired, for example, by recent government programs to distribute heavy military equipment, such as armored personnel carriers, to local police and by heavy-handed tactics such as those used after the shooting of an unarmed civilian in Ferguson, Missouri.

The federal government also needs to develop ways to connect with first responders prior to crises so that protocols for information handoff from the local to the federal level will be smooth should an emergency unfold. The federal intelligence system must begin by identifying who the decision makers are likely to be in a crisis and what information systems they are most likely to use. Then federal intelligence agencies, with the Department of Homeland Security in the lead, should figure out how to support and learn from them at the same time. For example, hospitals that make arrangements to compile, analyze, and share information during emergencies could include protocols in their data-sharing systems to ensure that any indicators of a biological attack are rapidly handed off to the national intelligence system so that other cities worldwide could be placed on alert. Since these protocols, likely based on automated inferencing technologies, would be discussed, negotiated, and put in place ahead of time, citizens’ privacy could be protected.

The federal government urgently needs to map these emerging solutions to information sharing at the local level and, rather than regulate them, adapt them to meet federal needs wherever possible in a “plug and play” system that can be taken apart and reconfigured as needed. In the meantime, the federal government should help sponsor civilian industries’ research and development of technologies that can help first responders manage crises, archiving technological solutions that may help other localities trying to get up to speed at home and abroad.

Of course, given the transnational nature of terrorist networks, tactical success will depend on other governments adopting similar approaches and the use of diplomacy, overseas military support, and intelligence sharing with foreign governments. Indeed, from the tactical perspective, the

urgent need to provide support to field-based operations suggests that the U.S. Department of Defense's move to organize intelligence support to special operations forces engaged in counterterrorist operations is not only wise but essential, and hardly a sign of weakness at the top levels of civilian intelligence agencies. If such military support is not, however, coordinated with embassy and civilian intelligence operations, it may create more problems than it solves. Civilian tactical intelligence operations will continue to be vital and will touch on matters in which the Department of Defense has a stake. As Dan Byman reminds us, states can also be adversaries, sponsoring terrorism in either the active or passive sense and using mutual relationships to influence U.S. actions in debilitating ways.⁵³ Whether active, passive, or part-time sponsors, these governments will necessarily be intelligence targets even if they occasionally cooperate on tactics from time to time or are otherwise considered liaison "partners." The Pentagon will want and need to know what civilian intelligence learns and will not want its operations conflicting with civilian ones.

In any case, the conventional wisdom that human intelligence against terrorist adversaries must operate principally outside traditional diplomatic circles is wrong. Classic modes of collection, including official cover, are crucial to detect and counter state sponsorship of terrorism and to work with foreign agencies engaged in domestic intelligence and law enforcement at the local level. Passive sponsors and liaison partners may coexist in one country's government. Just as when targeting terrorists, intelligence must discern the differing motivations and roles within and among these governments if it is to help with plans to engage, coerce, pressure, manipulate, cajole, or trick them while at the same time avoiding blowback or other unintended consequences.⁵⁴ As Byman points out, France had a defensive "sanctuary doctrine" until 1986 that allowed terrorists to operate within its borders so long as French interests were not jeopardized. While France was not successful in preventing terrorist attacks against its citizens, and it slowly changed course, U.S. efforts to influence a state making similar choices today would necessarily differ radically from one taken toward, for example, a state providing sanctuary of the kind the Taliban offered to Bin Laden in Afghanistan. In these regards, the recent discussion in the wake of the Snowden revelations of whether "friends" should spy on "friends" has been simplistic and damaging; it assumes that allied governments are always unified and always act in the best interests of one's own, which is demonstrably not the case.

Finally, the strategic requirements of countering terrorists are particularly critical in an era of globalization. Thomas Friedman, in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, discusses the need for generalists who can make connections

among disciplines and track ripple effects from one domain, such as genetic engineering, to other domains, such as international organized crime or finance.⁵⁵ At the strategic level, counterterrorism intelligence demands this kind of cross-disciplinary analysis. For this reason, the formation of counterterrorism centers focused on current operations and threat reporting may not be enough. Driven by today's agenda, these centers are likely to show preference for current operations over the bigger picture. With the evolution of wars in Iraq, Syria, and other parts of the Middle East, the relationship between jihadists' larger political goals and its use of terrorism seems blindingly apparent; but our response is instinctively to ask what it all means for us. The relationships among ISIL, Al Qaeda, and Khorasan requires sophisticated cross-discipline analysis, including how the use of terrorist tools affect them and how we might leverage their dynamics. Such analysis requires, in turn, bold collection strategies that put human collectors into the thick of things.

To augment the centers' efforts, the U.S. intelligence system needs to strengthen its strategic capabilities, ideally under the auspices of the National Intelligence Council. This invigorated effort should be dedicated to understanding the conflict with Islamist extremism at a deeper level, including who the parties are and how their interests are evolving. The analysts involved should nonetheless provide policy support to the diplomats and narrative builders—principally public relations officers and ambassadors—who can articulate the themes most likely to influence opinion in countries of concern. Because stories and deceptions build and dissipate quickly, these strategic analysts will have tactical roles to play from time to time. But their principal concern should be to paint the larger picture of the conflict in which we are engaged, distinguishing the networks from the ad hoc actors and the big wins from the small.

As just mentioned, however, strategic analysis cannot be accomplished without strategic collection to accompany it. This will require a long-term investment in deep cover human intelligence officers and open source collectors whose purpose will be to sense the deep cultural shifts Friedman has described. These collectors should also be encouraged to be analysts as well, so steeped in the societies and subjects they explore that they understand them intuitively and are able to generate their own flexible and focused requirements. In this way, strategic warning can smoothly lead to tactical anticipation and ultimately actionable intelligence. These should be seamlessly connected, not artificially separated by the walls of intelligence centers or the artificially distinct career paths of "analyst" and "collector."

It will also be necessary to forge a constructive working relationship with universities where programs are offered in the intelligence domain—either

the art and practice of the profession itself or the substantive areas that future intelligence and national security analysts are absorbing. On university campuses, the public dialogue is already engaged; it concerns how democratic societies might best adjust to a world of much more intrusive surveillance and dispersed threat. This should be received as good news among intelligence professionals. Without this informed and disciplined dialogue, the politics of intelligence would likely continue to be affected by cultural bias, anecdotal evidence, and suspicion. At a time when the intelligence community has been criticized both for risk aversion and overreach, it would seem that this would be one area where everyone might agree that the risk is worth the gain.

The answers to our three opening questions thus seem clear. The recent tolerance for leaks and the rollback of domestic intelligence capabilities have left us more tactically vulnerable. However, with creative leadership, these events may yet lead to more enduring strategies for public-private partnerships in the “plug-and-play” model. Our lack of strategic focus has made intelligence support for counterterrorism tricky because tactical wins, using drone attacks, manhunts, and assassinations, distract us from possibly more productive long-term strategies and, indeed, complicate them. Third, reorganizing intelligence bureaucracies cannot help when the war is on: we have to gain decision advantages with the intelligence system we have. Time is not on our side.

Notes

1. At the forefront of the pushback have been two organizations in particular: the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union. See <https://www.eff.org/press/releases/eff-sues-nsa-director-national-intelligence-zero-day-disclosure-process> for an example of the watchdog role these organizations have performed.

2. Kerry Pickett, “Army Threat Integration Center: ISIS Issues Direct Threat to Military Personnel and Their Families in the US,” *Briartbart: The Conversation*, September 29, 2014, <http://www.briartbart.com/InstaBlog/2014/09/29/Army-Threat-Integration-Center-ISIS-Issues-Direct-Threat-To-Military-Personnel-And-Families-In-America> (accessed October 1, 2014).

3. On October 6, 2014, the director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, James Comey, issued a public warning: The Khorasan group, “battle-hardened” members of Al Qaeda fighting in Syria, would attack in the West “sometime very, very soon.”

4. The absence of declassified information on the daily performance of intelligence agencies makes the evaluation of intelligence reforms difficult. Excessive attention to arrest numbers or squabbles among intelligence bureaucracies

may distract from the true measures of success for intelligence systems: whether intelligence is improving decision making against adversaries attempting to put American and allied lives in jeopardy.

5. For more on this argument see Jennifer E. Sims, "Intelligence in International Politics," in Gregory F. Treverton and Wilhelm Agrell, eds., *National Intelligence Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 58–92.

6. The theory of intelligence that underlies this approach, including definitions and indicators of success and failure, will not be discussed at length here. However, its essential features will become apparent in the course of the discussion.

7. The idea that the challenge is "new" stems from institutional and official preoccupation with shifting from Cold War adversaries to the post-Cold War international environment. Thus, accompanying calls for a revolution in military affairs have come, and so has much discussion of the meaning and purpose of "transformation." That intelligence systems have to shift targets from the "old" state-centric approach to the "new" focus on transnational groups does not mean, however, that transnational challenges have not confronted states in the past.

8. Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995), 18–38.

9. Lawrence LaFore, *The Long Fuse: An Interpretation of the Origins of World War I*, 2nd ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1977), esp. 49–73.

10. Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 49.

11. *Ibid.*, 48–53.

12. For more on the Trust, see Christopher Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986), 313–17. For suggestions of its impact on James Jesus Angleton and thus American counterintelligence practice post-WWII, see Andrew's later volume, *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 195, 313, 401–2. According to Jeffrey Richelson, the Trust was just one of many successful counterintelligence operations run by the Cheka. Another was known as SINDIKAT, and it targeted one monarchist in particular, the former terrorist and revolutionary Boris Savinkov. The Cheka regarded him as a hub of the monarchist network and plotted traps for him—ones with good bait and delayed springs. First, they sent an operative to his base in Poland carrying documents establishing his bona fides as deputy chief of staff of Internal Service Troops and a secret counterrevolutionary. Savinkov believed him, recruited him, and used him as a trusted agent. The Bolsheviks quickly wrapped up the Polish network when they had enough evidence and Savinkov fled to Paris. Surprisingly, he remained vulnerable to the ploy and was eventually lured to Russia where he was arrested. It was never clear whether he fell, jumped, or was pushed from a window in Moscow's Lubyanka prison. See Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 59–60.

13. This summary of the Trust relies heavily on Richelson's account in *A Century of Spies*, 61–62.

14. Ibid., 61.

15. See Nigel West, *MASK: MI5's Penetration of the Communist Party of Great Britain* (London: Routledge/Taylor and Francis, 2005).

16. Ibid., 5.

17. Bruce Hoffman, "A Nasty Business," *Atlantic Monthly*, January 2002, 50–51.

18. Matthew Teague, "Double Blind: The Untold Story of How British Intelligence Infiltrated and Undermined the Irish Republican Army," *Atlantic*, April 2006, 53–62.

19. See Porch, *The French Secret Services*, for a discussion of the effects of bureaucratic infighting on intelligence performance in France before WWI, especially 39–78.

20. Elaine Sciolino, "Spanish Judge Calls for Closing U.S. Prison at Guantánamo," *New York Times*, June 4, 2006.

21. Ibid.

22. For an excellent discussion of this dilemma, see Lawrence Freedman, *Adelphi Paper 379: The Transformation of Strategic Affairs* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2006), 39–44.

23. Interestingly, European critics, including the Spanish who have fought domestic terrorism for years, argue that extreme methods do not work well against terrorists and cause more problems than they solve. See Elaine Sciolino, "Spanish Judge Calls for Closing U.S. Prison at Guantanamo."

24. The following discussion summarizes ideas expressed at greater length in the author's chapter, "Understanding Friends and Enemies," in *Transforming U.S. Intelligence*, ed. Jennifer E. Sims and Burton Gerber (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 14–31.

25. These insights were provided by Daniel Byman, reporting on the techniques used by German authorities against Al Qaeda. Private conversation and Byman's unpublished manuscript, May 31, 2006.

26. See Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, *Linked: The New Science of Networks* (Cambridge: Perseus, 2002). According to Babarasi, "A few well-trained crackers could destroy the net in thirty minutes from anywhere in the world." This could be done by "attacking a few key routers to launching denial of service attacks against the busiest ones. Code Red worm (summer of 2001) burrowed into hosts and then launched traffic at whitehouse.gov. Automated virus. Cascading failure of other routers resulting from the redirection of traffic smaller nodes would finish the job. Destruction of the Internet is likely to be the goal of only terrorists or rogue states. Real hackers and crackers wouldn't want the collapse of their 'toy'." Ibid., 154.

27. Jimmy Lee Shreeve, "The New Breed of Cyber-Terrorist," *Independent*, May 31, 2006, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/the-new-breed-of-cyber-terrorist-480479.html>. The U.S. Cyber Consequences Unit is an independent, non-profit (501c3) research institute.

28. Ibid.

29. James R. Gosler, "The Digital Dimension," in *Transforming U.S. Intelligence*, ed. Jennifer E. Sims and Burton Gerber (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 96–114. For the best theoretical examination of the difficulties predicting the ripple effect of minor change on complex systems, see Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

30. Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1999), 33.

31. Not all experts agree with Gosler's thesis. James Simon, of Microsoft Corporation, has argued that the redundancies built into the high-technology manufacturing and software design make significant product tampering virtually impossible (author interview, October 15, 2005). Gosler disagrees, noting that Microsoft often fails to discover benign problems with its software until it is introduced commercially and tested by millions of users.

32. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 45.

33. For more on open source intelligence, please see Orion Lewis and Erica Chenoweth, "Facilitating Interagency Communication and Open Source Intelligence for Counterterrorism," in *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century*, ed. James J. F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007).

34. I have discussed clustering briefly in "Understanding Friends and Enemies," in *Transforming U.S. Intelligence*, 14–31. This discussion is based on the research and writings of, among others, Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities and Software* (New York: Scribner's, 2001).

35. For more on swarming, clustering, and the Internet's impact on war, see, in addition to Steven Johnson's *Emergence*: Howard Reingold, *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution* (Cambridge: Perseus Books, 2002); and John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Advent of Netwar* (Washington, DC: Rand National Defense Research Institute, 1996).

36. Similarly, young people used text messaging and the Internet to energize the Democratic Party's base during the last presidential election. Though the campaign that spearheaded the innovation was Howard Dean's, an early loser in the primaries, his recognition of the potential political impact of instant communication and swarming catapulted him to the head of the party nonetheless.

37. Reingold, *Smart Mobs*.

38. Stephen Grey and Don Van Natta, "13 With the CIA Sought by Italy in a Kidnapping," *New York Times*, June 25, 2005.

39. CIA counterterrorist operations in Italy had some of the characteristics of swarming because cell phones were apparently used to coordinate the last tactical maneuvers before capture; in this case CIA decision making was less quick and agile than Italian law enforcement and the U.S. effort was disrupted. See *Ibid*.

40. See James Bamford, *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency* (New York: Doubleday, 2001).

41. Although traditional scholars have been slow to accept intelligence within the disciplines of political science or international relations, their resistance is

gradually giving way to student demand. Many universities now offer intelligence courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Specialized schools also advertise professional intelligence training and have begun to organize nationally to promote private sector training for prospective and midcareer intelligence officers. The intelligence products generated by these schools, including current intelligence digests derived from open source information, are read within the U.S. government. This productivity is hardly surprising; open source intelligence firms started springing up in the private sector over 15 years ago as private firms recognized that competitive intelligence was useful to businesses competing in the marketplace and began hiring former intelligence professionals to conduct research, improve decision making, and protect their proprietary information.

42. For an excellent study of this problem, see Andy Greenberg, *This Machine Kills Secrets: How Wikileaks, Cypherpunks, and Hacktivists Aim to Free the World's Information* (New York: Dutton, 2012).

43. For an extended discussion of this point, see Jennifer E. Sims, "Understanding Ourselves," in *Transforming U.S. Intelligence*, ed. Jennifer E. Sims and Burton Gerber (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 32–59.

44. Bryan Appleyard, "Google and Julian Assange Battle It Out on the Page," *New Republic*, October 10, 2014, <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/119796/julian-assange-vs-google> (accessed October 12, 2014).

45. See, e.g., Bruce Berkowitz, *The New Face of War: How War Will Be Fought in the 21st Century* (New York: Free Press, 2003).

46. See Jennifer E. Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison: Devils, Deals and Details," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 195–217.

47. Freedman, *Adelphi Paper* 379, 90–91.

48. This insight has been provided to me by several of my students, including John Douglas who wrote a master's thesis on the global insurgency of which Iraq might be a part, and Sara Moller, whose master's thesis, "Coalitions of Terror: Rethinking the al-Qa'ida Network," explored whether Al Qaeda is truly a transnational network or rather more closely resembles an alliance or set of liaison relationships among contending Islamist groups.

49. Max Boot, *Statement before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities*, June 29, 2006.

50. Intelligence seeks decision advantage: to provide better information about the decisive aspects of the competition to one's own decision makers than is available to their opponents. This advantage is gained by gathering and analyzing the best information possible for one's own side while degrading the other side's efforts to do likewise.

51. Karen J. Greenberg, ed., *Al-Qaeda Now: Understanding Today's Terrorists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 12.

52. This idea of exploiting asymmetric advantages comes from a conversation with William Nolte, the then deputy assistant director of central intelligence for

analysis and production for the Central Intelligence Agency, for which I am most grateful.

53. See the chapter by Daniel Byman in this publication. Also see Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

54. Ibid.

55. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 18–22.

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The U.S. Government's Counterterrorism Research and Development Programs

Michael B. Kraft

“BETTER THINGS FOR BETTER LIVING” WAS A major advertising slogan of the DuPont Company during the 1980s.¹ A variation of this might be “better things for staying alive” as a goal of the U.S. government’s multibillion-dollar program for research and development (R&D) of better equipment to counter terrorists at home and abroad. Dozens of federal agencies are currently working to develop a wide variety of equipment and tools. Millions of dollars go into developing devices and methods to detect conventional explosives and biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear weapons before they can cause mass casualties. Millions more are appropriated for developing better equipment to help first responders and law enforcement or military personnel cope with an attack, defeat hostage takers, or mitigate the effects of an attack that could not be prevented.

The extensive counterterrorism R&D (CT R&D) programs are intended to save lives by either helping prevent terrorist attacks or minimizing the damage if they do take place. However, the general public sees little of these R&D products except when airline passengers and their hand baggage are screened or visitors have to pass through a metal detector when entering some government buildings and museums. Most of the equipment is not readily visible, such as monitoring devices tucked inside buildings that can detect biological, chemical, or radioactive agents. Many kinds

of special equipment are usually stored away out of public view until needed—for example, protective suits for first responders and robots used to safely handle suspected bombs.

This chapter will provide an overview of the U.S. federal government's counterterrorism research and development testing and evaluation (CT R&DTE) programs, describe the major components and coordinating groups, and provide an illustrative sampling of some of the research projects. Obviously, a detailed picture of all the nearly 100 agencies and sub-agencies involved in one form or another of the U.S. government's counterterrorism programs is beyond the scope of this chapter. Research and development is but one component of the U.S. government counterterrorism efforts, complementing other programs such as antiterrorism training, counterterrorism financing, and of course intelligence cooperation and investigations.²

In recent years, and especially since 9/11, the CT R&D effort in the United States has become a growth industry, evolving in stages from about \$10 million in the mid-1980s (for the primary interagency R&D program) to about \$5 billion a year, spread across a number of agencies.

The types of terrorist threats have also evolved over the years and present new challenges, such as small explosives hidden in a person's underwear or body cavities by suicide bombers and large improvised explosive devices (IEDs) capable of destroying heavy vehicles. These threats require continued R&D for countermeasures in such subject areas as detecting and defeating IEDs as well as improvements in older systems, such as airport X-ray machines and scanners. The organizational framework also has changed and continues to evolve, most markedly since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003.

Because so many government agencies are involved to one extent or another in counterterrorism-related research projects (and some of the research is applicable for use in nonterrorism situations), it is difficult to provide a complete and precise organizational and budget chart of all the nation's efforts in this realm. For example, while the FY 2007 budget request for Homeland Security CT R&DTE was estimated at \$5.1 billion by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a White House Office of Science and Technology fact sheet used a figure of "over \$4.8 billion."³ As a CRS report for Congress noted, "Coordination of federal counterterrorism R&D is a particular challenge because relevant programs exist in many different agencies and accurate information about their activities can be difficult to obtain."⁴

The DHS receives about one-fifth of the overall annual federal funding for R&D, mainly to support work in cybersecurity, explosives detection,

nuclear detection, and chemical/biological detection, and for the development of state-of-the-art solutions for first responders.

Because of concerns over bioterrorism, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and primarily the National Institutes of Health (NIH), receives about 40 percent of the counterterrorism-related research budget. The Department of Defense (DOD)—the largest source of funding for the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG), an interagency coordinating body established three decades ago—receives about a fifth of the CT R&D funding. Not all of it goes to the TSWG, however. The departments of energy, agriculture, and other agencies also receive funding for CT R&D as described later in this chapter.

In general, there are currently three types of organizational frameworks for CT R&D by the federal government:

- Projects coordinated and funded on an interagency basis, primarily but not exclusively through the interagency TSWG;⁵
- Projects under the auspices of the DHS, which has become a hub for selecting and funding research projects previously selected and conducted by some of the individual agencies; and
- Individual agencies conducting specialized research, such as the Department of Energy (DOE), the Justice Department's National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and elements of the Department of Defense. These include the Defense Advance Research Agency (DARPA),⁶ which funds long-term basic research for a variety of issues, rather than a specific system or hardware solution. This chapter however focuses on the applied research and development efforts.

The private sector and universities are major research players, although often funded by federal sources. Project proposals often originate from them as well as the government counterterrorism R&D specialists.

The budget and bureaucratic structure, however, is not the full picture. The working relationships between midlevel career government officials from different agencies are extremely important. Some of these professionals, from different agencies, have often worked together for years and serve on related committees or working groups. This has been an important element in avoiding duplication and preventing potentially good projects from falling between the cracks.

Background

Although individual agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the NIJ have conducted limited CT R&D for many years,

in some cases since the 1970s, their efforts were not always coordinated with other agencies until the 1990s. Proposals to develop a coordinated federal government R&D program began materializing in 1982, when the Reagan administration's National Security Directive 30⁷ established an interagency coordinating committee to develop U.S. government policies on terrorism. The Department of State (DOS) was made the lead agency for countering international terrorism, and chaired the group known as the Interdepartmental Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (IWG/CT). The group consisted of officials at the assistant secretary level from several agencies, such as the departments of Defense, Justice, and State.

In turn, various specialized subgroups were established, including an interagency group (the TSWG) to coordinate R&D on equipment to counter terrorism and bring together representatives of a dozen agencies, such as the DOS, DOD, DOE, NIJ, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and FAA. The intent was to make sure there was no duplication between the agencies and to fund worthwhile research that "is needed but not being carried out by any the agencies because it falls into the gaps between adjacent missions and jurisdictions."⁸

In the interagency coordinating effort, the DOD is the major player, providing the bulk of the funding and manpower. These DOD efforts are organized around three tiers. The TSWG is part of the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO), which in turn operates as a program office under the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict.

The Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO)

The CTTSO mission is to leverage technical expertise, operational objectives, and interagency sponsor funding. Its multiagency, multiuser approach to resource and information-sharing positions helps identify the front line requirements that can service multiple users. It works with more than 100 government agencies, state and local government, law enforcement, and first responder organizations.⁹

The CTTSO currently oversees the following programs focusing on different aspects of combating terrorism. The largest of these is the TSWG, whose mission is to identify and prioritize the needs of the national interagency community through research and development programs for combating terrorism. As described below, the TSWG helps prevent duplication and to identify and fill gaps in existing research. The TSWG funds a wide variety of rapid research programs to develop products that often can be used by more than one agency. In addition to working with a variety

of American research and development facilities and companies, the TSWG also works with selected foreign partners on projects of mutual interest. The other two counterterrorism components of CTTSO are more specialized:

- The *Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Low-Intensity Conflict* program provides explosive ordnance disposal technicians and special operations forces operators with the advanced technologies and mission-focused solutions required to address current and emerging threats presented by unconventional and asymmetric warfare.
- The *Irregular Warfare Support* program's mission is to develop adaptive and agile ways and means to support irregular warfare in the current and evolving strategic environments. It identifies materiel and nonmateriel solutions via operational analysis, concept development, field experimentation, and delivery capabilities to defeat the motivations, sanctuaries, and activities of targeted state and nonstate actors.

The Technical Support Working Group (TSWG)

The TSWG is the U.S. national forum that identifies, prioritizes, and coordinates interagency and international R&D requirements for combating terrorism.¹⁰ The TSWG focuses on projects that can be completed rapidly, usually within two years, to meet the high-priority needs of the combating terrorism community, and for addressing joint international operational requirements through cooperative R&D with major allies. Thus it focuses on applied research and not basic research as does DARPA.

The TSWG does not develop new equipment or systems itself, but rather provides funding to private and public contractors with groundbreaking ideas that have antiterrorism applications. The TSWG issues public notices describing a technological need to solve an antiterrorist problem, identified through consultation with representatives of over 80 organizations across the country who prioritize R&D requirements for combating terrorism. Then contractors submit proposals that are reviewed by the working group.

Additionally, the TSWG has helped arrange the transfer of new technologies to state and local law enforcement. TSWG membership includes representatives from more than 100 government organizations. Participation is open not only to federal departments and agencies, but also to first responders and appropriate representatives from state and local governments and international agencies. These departments and agencies work together by participating in one or more subgroups. The TSWG's 10

subgroups (see below) are chaired by senior representatives from federal agencies with special expertise in those functional areas.¹¹

The operational and management oversight is provided by CTTO. The State Department Counterterrorism Bureau provides policy oversight. The DOE and the FBI provide technical co-chairs who also advise on project selection and technical approaches to addressing the requirements and gaps in existing research.¹² The State Department was selected to provide policy oversight because it was considered to be an “honest broker” with no vested interest in a particular line of research. The TSWG’s establishment was endorsed by a high-level commission headed by then Vice President George H. W. Bush after the bombing of the U.S. Embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 by Islamic radicals. The 1991 Vice President’s Report on Combating Terrorism recommendations supported the TSWG, then still in the embryonic stage, to “ensure the development of appropriate counterterrorism technologies.”¹³

The Evolution of the Technical Support Working Group

The TSWG has grown and evolved over the past two decades. It began with no full-time staff—the officials from State, Defense, and other agencies contributed their time to the interagency process while attending to their duties within their home agencies. About 120 persons, some of them contractors, now work on the TSWG program, helping evaluate projects and handling the research and contract paperwork. The representatives of the some 100 federal agencies and their component offices participating in the program contribute their time as well as operational and technical insight in the prioritization, management, operational testing, and ultimate use of the systems developed. The contributions of these experts are one of the major reasons for the success of TSWG, according to officials who have been involved in the program over a period of years.

The program began relatively modestly, with a \$10 million appropriation in the State Department’s budget for FY 1987, initially authorized in the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Anti-Terrorism Act of 1986.¹⁴ Although the State Department chaired the organization, it did not have an existing office for administratively handling R&D contracts. Therefore, in order to save operating and personnel costs, the DOS worked out an agreement to transfer the funds to the DOD, which already had specialists experienced in administering R&D contracts, for the purposes of executing the program under State’s policy oversight.

After a period of congressional budget cuts, by FY 1995 the budget was back up to \$11 million. Following the August 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the TSWG budget grew to \$70

million, and after 9/11 the TSWG's budget grew to \$180 million in FY 2003. By FY 2013, the funding level reached \$123.7 million.¹⁵

The TSWG budget comes from three basic components: (1) the so-called core funding, which comes primarily from the DOD; (2) the congressional add-ons as a result of appropriations incorporated by congressional committees or floor amendments; and (3) "leveraged" funding from other agencies. For example, the FBI, FAA, and other agencies put money into specific TSWG projects of particular interest to them. For FY 2015, the program is expected to have appropriations of about \$100 million from DOD, including \$2 million from the State Department. The range for the past three years has been about \$190–200 million. The State Department's contribution, though small compared to the other agencies, has been important to foster the State Department's policy guidance on key issues.¹⁶

The TSWG balances its program development investments across four pillars of combating terrorism:¹⁷

- *Antiterrorism*: Defense measures taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts;
- *Counterterrorism*: Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism;
- *Intelligence Support*: Collection and dissemination of terrorism-related information taken to oppose terrorism throughout the entire threat spectrum; to include terrorist use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials or high-yield explosive devices; and
- *Consequence Management*: Preparation for and response to the consequences of a terrorist event.

To carry out its mission, the TSWG currently has 10 specialized subgroups¹⁸ (it began with six), chaired by various agency representatives, and typically including members from half-a-dozen agencies:

- Advanced Analytic Capabilities (chaired by the DOD);
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Countermeasures (DOD, DOS, and DHS);
- Improvised Device Defeat (FBI; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and explosives [ATF] and the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board);
- Investigative and Forensic Science (DHS, U.S. Secret Service);
- Irregular Warfare & Evolving Threats (DOD);
- Personnel Protection (DOD and DHS);
- Physical Security (ATF, DOE, and Office of the Provost Marshal General);
- Surveillance, Collection, and Operations Support (Intelligence Community);
- Tactical Operations Support (DOD and DOE); and
- Training Technology Development (U.S. Special Operations Command).

These subgroups develop requirements that may come from a variety of sources: suggestions made by law enforcement or federal officials, the private sector, or academic community, or from the needs perceived by the experts in each subject area. The subgroups meet frequently to evaluate the proposals and nominate the ones that they conclude are the most worthy of funding. The proposals are then examined and approved or disapproved by the TSWG Executive Committee at their annual review meetings. Priority is given to projects that could be useful to more than one agency or end user. Because the officials who are members of the subcommittees are also the experts within their own agencies, this consultative process helps prevent duplication and promotes joint projects. Depending on the budget projections, a number of proposed initiatives may not make the cut and are deferred to following years, or funding might be initially provided at a lower level than originally proposed, stretching out the research an additional year or two.¹⁹

The TSWG focuses on relatively short-term projects that usually can be finished in two or three years, and then transitioned to one or more interested agencies before completion and testing, and then moved to the private sector for production. The actual R&D is conducted by a variety of government labs, universities, and private sector companies.

The TSWG is making a real effort to reach out to “nontraditional companies” that are not associated with the traditional defense contractors in an attempt to tap into “out of the box” thinking and identify products that are pretty far along, according to a senior CTTO official,²⁰ who said that in this way, the TSWG can make its spending go further (paying for success, not development). The TSWG has a large-scale outreach program to the private sector, using Web sites and conferences to advertise its requirements. Although the TSWG had funded private sector projects earlier, the large-scale outreach effort began in 1999, through meetings with private sector representatives to explain the TSWG’s requirements. The interest was enormous, with thousands of proposals submitted—17,000 in the first year following the 9/11 attacks, TSWG officials estimated.

Within four weeks after requirements are issued each year, thousands of proposals are received. Some come from major companies and universities, others from small businessmen or inventors, sometimes two- and three-person companies. Only a relative handful of the proposals meet the requirements and survive the review and selection process.

As for the success rate of projects that are funded, one TSWG official compared it to mutual funds—there may be some that have a relatively high chance of working out, but bring a relatively low payoff, while others have a lower chance of succeeding but offer greater benefits if they succeed. Mean-

while, some difficult problems—such as detecting explosives at a distance—are being tackled simultaneously by a variety of research approaches.

Projects

A project's costs may range from \$500,000 to \$20 million—in contrast to the early days in the program when projects would typically be funded at \$300,000 to \$400,000. The median is about \$750,000, according to TSWG officials. Currently funded projects range from small hand-held devices for detecting a variety of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals to better blast-resistant doors. In recent years, there has been an increased focus in the category of Advanced Analytical Capabilities—developing better programs for integrating, quickly analyzing, and acting on the vast flow of information that comes in, especially in fast-developing situations.

About 400 to 450 projects are in the works each year, at various stages of progress. While some of the research is aimed at developing new concepts and products, funds also are allocated to develop the next generation of old concepts. One example is an improved lightweight mask that will provide up to 20 minutes of protection against biological and chemical agents and can be carried in a briefcase or large coat pocket. An earlier model was developed in the 1990s. The current version has been distributed to thousands of government workers and to congressional offices.

The TSWG allocates about 10 percent of its funding for the development of countermeasures against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear measures. The DHS has funded more than 40 projects in this area through the TSWG. About 16 percent of the funding is allocated for surveillance, collection, and operations support. This is a highly sensitive area, and the TSWG describes its work in this area only in general terms. Smaller allocations go to such areas as VIP protection and mitigating the effects of explosions.

Largely because of the deadly use of IEDs against American and coalition troops (as well as civilians) in Iraq and Afghanistan, the largest percentage of TSWG funding (about one-fifth) had been allocated for projects to detect and defeat these explosives. Projects include improvements in radio-controlled robots that move on small tractor treads close enough to a suspected device to fire a small water charge into it to disable the explosive. Another project includes a small tent-like structure that shields a suspected bomb from radio waves, thus providing more safety for the bomb disposal technicians. This type of equipment can be useful for local or state police departments as well as in military zones.

The Explosive Detection subgroup has also been funding projects to detect large volumes of explosives from a distance. One of the complications in this endeavor is the pollutants in the atmosphere of most major cities. Research is being conducted along several avenues, and with at least one foreign partner. In another approach to the problem of detecting explosives, a research project developed a van carrying equipment that can surreptitiously drive past other vehicles or cargo containers and scan for explosives and other contraband. More than 60 such vans are now in operational use, and the van is commercially available.

Joint International Research

A prominent feature of the TSWG program has been its ability to leverage and coordinate the U.S. government's CT R&D projects with allied countries.²¹ For example, after Pan Am flight 103 was blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988, killing 270 persons with a small bomb using plastic explosives hidden in a radio, the TSWG quickly provided funding for the American part of an international effort to identify chemical markers to help detect plastic explosives that might be hidden in luggage. The markers were listed in the United Nations 1991 Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purposes of Detection.

Later, after the FY 1993 Defense Department Authorization Bill approved \$3 million for cooperative projects with NATO countries and major non-NATO allies, joint research agreements were established with Britain, Canada, and Israel. The U.S. conducts these projects on a bilateral basis. Trying to conduct joint research on the same project with three or more countries at once would be too complicated. However, sometimes different lines of research are conducted with one or more countries in order to try and address a common problem. These joint research efforts have the advantage of preventing duplication as well as gaining an additional professional perspective on a problem. In addition, research costs are sometimes lower in the other countries. The U.S. share of the joint research program has averaged about \$8 million a year per country, but this varies from year to year. Australia and Singapore joined the program in 2006.

Department of Homeland Security, the New Actor

The Department of Homeland Security emerged as a major R&D player with the establishment of the department in January 2003 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. As with the research conducted under the auspices of the TSWG, the DHS R&D—conducted by the Science and Technology

Directorate—focuses on applied research. It funds projects that can be brought to fruition within a two- to five-year time frame, rather than longer-term basic research. Unlike the TSWG, the DHS R&D is directed toward projects that are primarily useful for DHS's national and state/local needs, not for use by more than one agency. Some projects, however, may turn out to be useful for other agencies.

A Brief History

Just as the organization of DHS has evolved since it was hastily created in the wake of 9/11 by bringing two dozen agencies under one tent, the R&D machinery also has changed significantly in the past decade. The Homeland Security Act of 2002²² established four directorates (or in effect, four divisions) within DHS: Border and Transportation Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response Information Analysis, Infrastructure Protection, and the Directorate of Science and Technology (S&T Directorate). Since then, the department has been reorganized and the current directorates include Management, National Protection and Programs, and Science and Technology.²³

The S&T Directorate is led by an undersecretary, and it is the primary R&D arm of the department, with a mandated goal of managing science and technology research, from development through transition for the department's operational components and first responders and at the federal, state, and local level.²⁴ It has become the coordinating body within DHS. The directorate's stated mission is to protect the homeland by providing federal and local officials with state-of-the-art technology and other resources.

Although the bulk of DHS CT R&D activities are conducted under the S&T Directorate, some components of DHS—such as the Coast Guard and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA)—have semi-independent budgets because of their specialized needs (for example, Coast Guard maritime or aircraft specific projects). The Coast Guard's FY 2015 R&D request was \$17.947 million.

In recent years most of the TSA research has been moved into the main S&T Directorate. The TSA is charged with “developing and implementing more efficient, reliable, integrated, and cost effective screening programs.”²⁵ Congress appropriated \$323 million for this program in FY 2014. However, the research for such items as the Electronic Baggage Screening Program is “currently dependent on the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate's Transportation Security Laboratory for certification of the screening equipment and research and development of emerging screening technologies.”²⁶ During the past few years, the

budget allocation for TSA has dropped about 50 percent, according to a recent statement by the head of TSA, John Pistole.²⁷

The Directorate of Science and Technology

The directorate's budget not only funds projects that are intended to deal with terrorism threats; it also is concerned with all types of catastrophic threats. Some of the DHS-funded equipment, for example, can be used for both countering a terrorist chemical attack and also a spill of dangerous chemicals from an accident or for rescuing persons from a building damaged by an earthquake as well as a bombing attack.²⁸ The S&T Directorate describes four areas for its goals:²⁹

- New capabilities and knowledge products—Creating new technological capabilities that address DHS operational needs or that are necessary to address evolving homeland security threats.
- Process enhancements and efficiencies—Conducting systems-based analysis to provide streamlined, resource-saving process improvements to existing operations. (Analyzing and processing large flows of information during a major event is a challenge.)
- Acquisition support and operational analysis—Achieving more effective and efficient operations avoids costly acquisition failures and delays by leveraging S&T's technical expertise to improve project management, operational analysis, and acquisition management.
- Understanding of homeland security risks and opportunities—Contributing to the strategic understanding of existing and emerging threats and recognition of opportunities for collaboration across departmental, interagency, and state and local boundaries.

Projects fall under six primary commodity areas that directly support DHS component missions and fulfill S&T's statutory responsibility to support federal, state, and local first responders:³⁰

- First responders—Expanding first responder capabilities and improving their effectiveness, efficiency, and safety.
- Borders and maritime security—Enhancing security at the U.S. borders and along the waterways without impeding the flow of commerce.
- Chemical and biological defense—Detecting, protecting against, responding to, and recovering from chemical and biological incidents.
- Cybersecurity—Contributing to a safe, secure, and resilient cyber environment.
- Explosives—Protecting citizens and infrastructure from the devastating effects of explosives.

- Resilience—Improving the nation's preparedness for natural and manmade catastrophes.

Within these commodity areas, S&T is the U.S. government's lead or primary provider of R&D in four specific areas: unclassified cybersecurity, civilian biodefense, explosives detection in aviation environments, and first responders.³¹

The S&T organizational framework also includes major groupings, which in turn include more specialized divisions.³² The Support to the Homeland Security Enterprise and First Responders Group (FRG) strengthens the response community's abilities to protect the homeland and respond to disasters. Three FRG divisions work together to carry out this mission: the National Urban Security Technology Laboratory, the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility, and the Technology Clearinghouse/R-Tech.

The Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency (HSARPA) focuses on identifying, developing, and transitioning technologies and capabilities to counter chemical, biological, explosive, and cyber terrorist threats, as well as protecting our nation's borders and infrastructure. HSARPA manages five technical divisions to carry out this mission: (1) Borders and Maritime Security Division; (2) Chemical and Biological Defense Division; (3) Cyber Security Division; (4) Explosives Division; and (5) Resilient Systems Division.

The Acquisition Support and Operations Analysis (ASOA) Group provides analysis, engineering, expertise, and products connecting research, development, and acquisition to the operational end user.

The Research and Development Partnerships (RDP) Group works with other USG agencies, international cooperation programs and also has an office of Public and Private Partnerships and one of university programs. In addition, it houses offices that supervise the major laboratories under DHS. They are:

- *The Chemical Security Analysis Center*, which acts as a repository of chemical threat characterization and vulnerability assessments and provider of real-time expert analysis during chemical incident events;
- *The National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center*, which works to understand the risks posed by biological threats and provide forensic support and analysis for responses to bioterror and biocrime;
- *The National Urban Security Technology Laboratory*, which serves as a technical authority and resource to first responders, including state and local entities responsible for protecting our cities;

- *Plum Island Animal Disease Center*, which serves as the front line of defense against diseases that could devastate livestock, meat, and other animal products; and
- *The Transportation Security Laboratory*, which provides research, development, and validation of solutions to detect and mitigate the threat of improvised explosive devices.

The group's International Cooperative Programs Office also currently manages S&T's partnerships with Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the European Commission. Some of the work includes R&D.³³

Outside of government, S&T leverages its position as a federal R&D organization to facilitate communication across barriers that otherwise would prevent cooperation. For example, with the Linking the Oil and Gas Industry to Improve Cybersecurity (LOGIIC) program,³⁴ S&T brought together five major oil and gas competitors to work with government agencies on the development and distribution of cybersecurity solutions that protect the industry's critical infrastructure.

DHS S&T Funding

The appropriations for DHS S&T have fluctuated over the years, growing from less than \$300 million in programs in the FY2002 budget prepared before 9/11 to nearly \$1.3 billion in FY 2006. But funds were sharply cut the following year. In FY2014 the funding level reached \$1.22 billion. The FY2015 request submitted to Congress by the Office of Budget and Management (OMB) reduced the funding proposal to \$1.072 billion, a cut of \$148.26 million due to reduced construction funding.³⁵

Of the total S&T budget, the line item specifically for research by S&T R&D was \$33.788 million for FY 2015. The rest was allocated to support laboratories, university programs, management and administration, and acquisition and operations support.³⁶

Before adjourning in September, 2014, Congress continued DHS funding for only six months because of Republican opposition to President Obama's executive order on immigration that had the effect of reducing the number of deportations of illegal immigrants and their children who were born in the United States.

In January 2015 when the newly elected Republican Congress took office, the House passed an amended DHS appropriations bill (with anti-immigration provisions) that included \$1.1 billion for DHS S&T funding.

This is \$122 million below the FY 2014 enacted level, but \$32.1 million above the president's request. The bill then went to the Senate, amid President Obama's threats to veto it because of the immigration-related amendments. As of this writing, it remains to be seen how these issues of funding will play out. Fluctuations in funding have been a perennial problem for program managers and researchers in DHS as well as in other agencies. As many congressional observers have noted, when making budget cuts, Congress typically takes a short-term view and R&D is often a prime target.

The 2014 S&T annual report to Congress addressed the issue this way:

Stable funding is a critical ingredient for a successful R&D organization. R&D projects typically operate on longer timelines with progress measured over several years rather than several months to a year. The inability to fund R&D projects consistently across their lifespan has adverse consequences that disproportionately reduce or prevent return on R&D investments. Fluctuation in funding often leads to cancellation of projects before they have sufficient time to develop into useful applications, loss of forward momentum in key operational areas, and increased difficulty for the organization to retain top-level expertise and talent.³⁷

The same could be said of R&D funding for other parts of the government.

A major consideration in S&T project selection is keeping the "customer" in mind—that is, focusing R&D on the needs of the DHS operational agencies, such as the TSA, Coast Guard, and U.S. Secret Service, and through them, local officials and first responders. This prompted the S&T Directorate in 2006 to realign its functions to provide a more consumer-focused approach to the R&D mission.

Proposals for projects and suggestions for equipment improvement often come from local and state governments, police, fire chiefs, and through DHS officials involved with the emergency preparedness portfolio. Another consideration is the cost and maintenance factor. While the DHS helps develop and evaluate equipment, it is basically up to the local and state governments to decide what to purchase, either with their own funds or with federal grants. Thus, there is an incentive to develop products that are affordable by state and local governments.

The DHS also has been using the Internet to reach out for ideas as well as to potential research groups. For example, it has established what it calls a "Collaboration Community Board" for interested persons to propose ideas or offer suggestions and obtain comments.³⁸ The department also has Web sites used to reach out to the private sector, especially small businesses.³⁹

One issue facing the DHS (as well as other agencies) is setting priorities for selecting projects. About a third of the overall DHS R&D budget is directed toward defending against weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE). Within the government, there is a heavy emphasis on being able to deter and counter large and catastrophic attacks, such as the explosion of a “dirty” radiological device in a major city, which would have an immediate and large-scale impact, or the release of biological agents that potentially could infect thousands of persons before the symptoms are recognized several days later. The Ebola epidemic in West Africa and the indications that some terrorist groups are speculating about trying to find ways of developing bioterrorism weapons no doubt adds to the importance of research on detection equipment and other ways to counter CBRNE attacks.

There are some in the R&D community, however, who feel that despite the potential dangers of a large-scale WMD attack, terrorists are far more likely to use conventional explosives or explosives made from fertilizer, such as the one used against the Murrah Federal Office Building in Oklahoma City or the February 1993 attack against the World Trade Center. When translating these contrasting perspectives and views into decisions on funding specific lines of research and projects, policymakers must weigh a variety of factors including available intelligence information on the terrorists’ intent and their capabilities. Decision makers also have to take into account both the difficulties that terrorists might have in obtaining and using the necessary materials for a WMD attack, as well as the cost to society if the terrorists were able to overcome these obstacles and succeed.

Some research projects do not present such difficult choices—for example, better protective equipment that can be used by first responders in dealing with a chemical terrorist attack can also be useful in coping with an overturned railway tank car containing a dangerous chemical.

DHS S&T Projects

The large array of DHS-funded R&D projects range from improving the protective suits used by firefighters, to developing performance standards for hand-held detectors of trace explosives, to a system of networked monitors to detect the release of chemical agents in the subway systems of major metropolitan areas. Some of the projects first originated in other agencies, and DHS took over the funding after the projects got underway.

Many of the DHS projects are intended to help first responders. One of the major problems has been the difficulties that different groups of first responders—such as fire departments and police departments—have in

communicating with each other when their equipment is not compatible. This problem was highlighted during the 9/11 attacks when the New York police and fire departments trying to rescue persons in the World Trade Center were unable to communicate with each other because they were on different frequencies; as a direct consequence, the lives of many firemen and others were lost.

To alleviate these problems, DHS is funding a Multi-Band Radio initiative to develop radios that can communicate across several frequencies and thus enable seamless communication among agencies operating on disparate channels. Another is the "Turtle Mike" that allows law enforcement, medical, fire and rescue, and public works personnel to communicate with each other. Funded by S&T's First Responders Group (FRG), the Turtle Mike bridges these normally stand-alone systems and offers a platform that links different systems together.⁴⁰

Another project to solve the communications problems between various first responders is the new Radio Internet Protocol Communications Module (RIC-M).⁴¹ Intended for use by local, state, and federal responders, it is a low-cost, external, standalone interface device that connects radio frequency (RF) system base stations, consoles, and other RF equipment—regardless of brand—over the Internet or private Internet protocol (PIP) network. Base stations are used by law enforcement, medical, and other agency dispatchers to communicate with first responders and agents in the field. Using the RIC-M, agencies can easily upgrade and reconfigure legacy systems for less than \$500, the program managers estimate. For dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters or a terrorist attack that brings down a building, S&T funded development of the FINDER,⁴² a device that uses low-power radar to detect breathing and heartbeats of persons buried under rubble when a building collapses.

Improving airport and other equipment is another ongoing area of R&D. One goal is to develop walk-through detection equipment that can screen shoes, thus allowing airline passengers to go through security checks more quickly without the time-consuming chore of taking off and putting on their shoes. These technologies are being developed in cooperation with basic research funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Another project is intended to reduce the false alarms in TSA checked baggage screening.⁴³

One high-profile R&D program in previous years was the development of equipment mounted on aircraft to defeat MANPADS, the shoulder-fired ground-to-air-missiles that terrorists have used to try to shoot down commercial airliners. Equipment has been developed and is used on military aircraft, but TSA administrator Pistole recently indicated that research was

not continuing because of a lack of demand and perceived risk. The airlines have been reluctant to equip all their planes due to the cost and weight of this technology. Mr. Pistole has also noted that although there have been four or five MANPAD attempts in Africa and the Middle East, there is no intelligence to indicate there are any loose missiles in the United States.⁴⁴

Training is becoming another increasingly important part of the R&D efforts—the development of modules, simulators, videos, and other tools to help train personnel in the use of equipment, coordination techniques, and other crisis responses.

Although counterterrorism R&D is generally perceived as dealing with tangible items, such as equipment or computer software, funding is also being directed toward research in the behavioral sciences. Through its academic “centers of excellence” program,⁴⁵ S&T is funding research that it hopes will help officials understand the motivations, beliefs, and intentions of potential terrorists. This follows the earlier and continuing work by the Justice Department’s National Institute of Justice (NIJ), which began funding research in the behavioral sciences in the late 1960s (as described below).

The Future

Looking toward the future, Dr. Reginald Brothers, the DHS Undersecretary for S&T, unveiled during a September 2014 congressional hearing a series of S&T goals for the future.⁴⁶ The broad categories included:

- Improved noninvasive and faster screening of persons, baggage, and cargo.
- Strengthened cybersecurity that will be “self-detecting, self-protecting, and self-healing” will deter illegal use, and will not compromise privacy.
- Better programs to help faster processing and analyzing of large flows of information to help decision makers take fast actions.
- Improved equipment and threat detection capabilities for first responders.
- Strengthened resilience through critical infrastructure and preparation to withstand and recover from naturally occurring and manmade disasters. Decision makers will know when disaster is coming, anticipate the effects, and use already-in-place or rapidly deployed countermeasures to shield communities from negative consequences.
- Adaptive responders of the future, able to respond to all dangers safely and effectively. Armed with comprehensive physical protection; interoperable, networked tools; technology-enhanced threat detection and mitigation capabilities; and timely, actionable information, the responder of the future will be able to serve more safely and effectively.

Meanwhile, the DHS strategic plan for 2014–2018 (released in December 2014) describes “strategies to conduct homeland security research and development,” and articulates the department’s intention to

employ scientific study to understand homeland security threats and vulnerabilities by pursuing a research and development strategy that is operationally focused, highly innovative and founded on building partnerships among operators, scientists, and engineers, and by providing operational support, timely experiments, measurements, testing, evaluation, and analyses of homeland security significance.

The plan also describes how DHS will

develop innovative approaches and effective solutions to mitigate threats and vulnerabilities by: 1) providing new capabilities through new technologies and operational process enhancements; 2) offering innovative systems-based solutions to complex problems; 3) delivering the technical depth and reach to discover, adapt, and leverage scientific and engineering solutions developed by federal agencies and laboratories, state, local, and tribal governments, universities, and the private sector across the United States and internationally; and 4) leveraging the depth of capacity in national labs, universities, and research centers by pursuing mixes of basic and applied research to deliver practical tools and analytic products that increase the effectiveness of components and save taxpayer dollars.⁴⁷

Other Agencies

As indicated earlier, many government agencies are involved in counterterrorism research development to one extent or another. The TSWG membership list includes 20 primary agencies plus their numerous component groups, such as the FBI and ATF, both of which are part of the Department of Justice (DOJ). Nearly 100 state, local, and nongovernmental organizations are affiliated with the TSWG, including the New York City police and fire departments, various DOD agencies, such as those dealing with chemical and biological warfare threats, and six DOJ organizations, including the FBI and NIJ.⁴⁸

There is also a great deal of collaboration and cooperation between the agencies. For example, although the largest portion of the DHS S&T Directorate funding request is dedicated to biological research, the DHS also works with the HHS and the NIH in this area. The DHS has been given the responsibility to incorporate a National Biodefense Counterterrorism Center, and it has taken over responsibility for the U.S. Agriculture

Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Plum Island Animal Disease Center, although USDA personnel will continue to conduct research there.

R&D at Individual Agencies

It would take a separate book to describe the wide spectrum of work done by all the many agencies involved to some extent or another in CT R&D. To illustrate the variety of research efforts, the following section provides several examples.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA is involved in relatively little-known CT R&D efforts as a result of concerns that terrorists might try to attack the food supply, perhaps through poisoning or contaminating food before it reaches supermarket shelves, or even the raw material—crops and animals. The Food and Drug Administration also works with the Department of Agriculture on these issues, including the Food Emergency Response Network.⁴⁹

Department of Energy (DOE)

The DOE is involved in counterterrorism through its focus on nonproliferation programs and protection of U.S. nuclear facilities. The DOE has also funded or initiated a variety of other projects, some of them as small as simulated “flash bang” hand grenades for use in training exercises for protecting nuclear facilities. DOE CT R&D efforts have included work on detection of toxic agents, genomic sequencing, and microfabrication techniques. The National Nuclear Security Administration conducts technical and scientific activities to characterize, detect, and defeat nuclear threat devices.⁵⁰

One interesting project originally designed for use by civilian security personnel in turn was useful for the military in Iraq. The “Kool Suit” is basically a thin bladder shaped by the wearer's body that fits under an armored vest. The bladder has tubes with drinking water and a solution to keep it cool. When the water gets too warm, the bladder can be replaced by a colder bladder. Although intended for DOE security personnel patrolling facilities in hot American summer weather, it was adapted for use in Iraq.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The FBI has a Counterterrorism and Forensic Science Research Unit⁵¹ that focuses on forensic sciences research and development for the FBI as

well as for federal, state, local, and international agencies. The research focuses on three primary goals: (1) the development of new capabilities; (2) improvements to existing capabilities; and (3) the defensibility of current and future capabilities. The goal of research and development is to cultivate and deliver new scientific technology and methods to support the operational requirements of the FBI as well as partner law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Research is conducted on a wide range of topics designed to support advancement in biological, chemical, and physical forensic analyses; operational response; and biometrics. In addition, the unit provides subject matter expertise as needed to support the FBI and the intelligence community. The FBI is an international leader in forensic science research and often assists other countries with forensic investigations.

National Institute of Justice (NIJ)

The NIJ was created by Congress in 1968 as the Justice Department's research, development, and evaluation arm. It conducts R&D in many physical science and technology areas as well as in the social and behavioral sciences. Its designated mission is to enhance the administration of justice and public safety, and it is the only federal agency dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the criminal justice system through scientific research.⁵²

The NIJ's research in social and behavioral sciences includes studies that examine what motivates terrorists, and explore the links between terrorists and international organized crime. Research areas include improving local law enforcement's ability to prevent and investigate incidents of terrorism. It also has sponsored research on policing in Arab communities, how terrorism laws impact state and local criminal justice operations, police work with public health agencies, and terrorist group learning processes. NIJ-funded researchers have also worked to untangle the complex relationships between terrorism, organized crime, white-collar crime, and money laundering.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

A joint program of the HHS and NIH conducts research in the development of a medical countermeasures program against biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.⁵³ The Division of Allergy, Immunology, and Transplantation has been tasked with coordinating and administering the NIH research to develop new and effective medical countermeasures to assess, diagnose, and care for civilians exposed to radiation and mitigate the harmful effects of such exposure.

The NIH also has developed partnerships between the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and several other NIH institutes and centers to execute the Medical Chemical Countermeasures Against Chemical Threats Program.⁵⁴ The overall goal of the program is to integrate cutting-edge research with the latest technological advances in science and medicine for a more rapid and effective response during an emergency.

Conclusion

Just as the terrorism threat continues to evolve, the U.S. government's counterterrorism research and development organization and programs must continue to adapt. The interagency coordination efforts that began developing in the 1980s under the interagency TSWG were roiled when the DHS was created in 2003 and began trying to establish its turf. One point of confusion developed when the DHS began approaching other governments to establish its own foreign partner working arrangements without informing the TSWG, which had long-established programs with the same countries.

These problems seem to have been worked out, but informal discussions with some officials suggest that coordination is not always complete. As with many other aspects of interagency coordination, personalities are important and strong leadership and oversight is essential to maintaining teamwork.

Meanwhile the DHS's organization has evolved and its S&T Directorate has become more streamlined. Many of the goals outlined by S&T director Dr. Brothers in his recent congressional testimony are grounded in and build upon earlier objectives.⁵⁵ Reaching these goals and continuing to improve existing equipment or develop new equipment and programs is an ongoing process. It is essential, however, as terrorists continue to change their methods of operations, expand their targets, and also employ traditional tactics and weapons—guns and grenades—as well as trying to develop more sophisticated bombs and perhaps weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, although the nation's R&D efforts have reached substantial funding levels, challenges remain as outlined in the TSWG and DHS S&T mission statements. Maintaining consistent funding is a challenge as the terrorism threat moves in and out of the headlines.

R&D does not typically produce quick results, and sometimes lines of research do not pan out altogether. Furthermore, when budgets are tight, officials in the White House Budget Office and Congress tend to put more priority on short-term issues, and funding for longer-term R&D usually

suffers. It is difficult, if not impossible, to predict in advance which particular R&D project may result in deterring a possible major terrorist bombing, WMD attack, or aircraft hijacking. However, the investment that prevents one catastrophic attack can at the same time save many lives as well as limit the economic impact of another attack. Effective R&D is an investment that requires patience and persistence, not only from the scientists and engineers involved but also from those who control the budgets.

Notes

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7. Presidential Security Directive 30, signed by President Reagan, April 10, 1982, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/nsdd30.pdf>.
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13. The Vice President's Report on Combatting Terrorism, 1991 available at http://www.population-security.org/bush_report_on_terrorism/bush_report_on_terrorism.htm.

14. Public Law 99-399 22 USC, §2711.
15. Author's discussions of funding allocations with TSWG officials, briefings with congressional staff, and budget documents.
16. Ibid.
17. Author's interviews with TSWG officials.
18. TSWG Annual Review, 2014, 12, http://www.cttso.gov/sites/default/files/2014CTTSOReviewBook_Webv3.pdf.
19. Interviews with a number of TSWG officials and the author's work with the program while in the State Department.
20. Interview with a CTTO official who declined to be identified by name because he was speaking without prior authorization from the public affairs department, May 2014.
21. TSWG Web site, http://www.tswg.gov/?q=international_partners.
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41. DHS Radio communications R&D program, <http://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/can-you-hear-me-now>.

42. DHS R&D program Detecting Heartbeats in Rubble, <http://www.dhs.gov/detecting-heartbeats-rubble-dhs-and-nasa-team-save-victims-disasters>.

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Denying Terrorists Sanctuary through Civil-Military Operations

Robert J. Pauly Jr. and Robert W. Redding

MARYEM HAD HEARD THAT THE NEW Afghan National Army (ANA) was coming to her village to provide medical services. While she was not sure she could trust any men with guns anymore, she knew she could use a doctor's services for Wakil, her two-year-old son, whose sickly body made him look like he was less than a year old. The khan who controlled the lands south of the village, as well as her tribal *malik* (essentially, a spokesman, as the Pashtun recognize no chieftains), had told her oldest son, Masud, that everyone should show up at least to see what they could get. Maryem was familiar with that concept, since her husband had been killed in a dispute as a result of *bedal*, one of the Pashtun codes of conduct that demands revenge and retribution for any wrong committed against another. The cousin whose *bedal* debt had been paid by her husband's blood had been kind enough to bring her and her six children under his roof, but he had limited resources that were first distributed to his two wives and their children. Maryem was desperate and knew that when the day came, she would get whatever she could as fast as possible.

On the day of the clinic to provide medical services, the ANA arrived before dawn and set up several large tents on the village's soccer field. Into and out of each of these tents was a path outlined with stakes and marking ribbon. Maryem brought Wakil, wrapped against the morning chill, to an area below the field and huddled with the other women from the village, all of whom had come to see the doctors and get whatever supplies they

could get. From her vantage point (and through the mesh of her burqa), she could see many Afghan soldiers unpacking boxes of supplies and getting organized. There were a few other people on the soccer field that she could see. Some were clearly Westerners in civilian clothing.

After a few minutes of waiting, she heard a man speaking in Pashtun over a loudspeaker. He said that on behalf of the government in Kabul, the ANA was providing free medical care and other supplies to the people of her village. He said that everyone present would be able to see a doctor, so please be patient. Then the loudspeakers began playing the song that goes with the Afghan national dance, after which some of the soldiers and some of the village men formed a circle and began to dance. To Maryem, it was all somewhat pleasant, but at the same time odd—unlike her past experiences, these soldiers were mostly pleasant and helpful; they were not stealing; and they were organized.

As she was thinking about that, a soldier came to the waiting area and said for the next group (which included Maryem and Wakil) to come with him. Other soldiers and leaders from the village ensured that the waiting area remained calm and orderly. She was first taken to a tent where there was a table with several Afghan soldiers, who were gathering information about them. They were mostly asking questions about what the villagers' chief medical complaints were, as well as their names and where they lived. After that, the group was queued up in another tent, waiting for the doctors. While they were there, another set of Afghan soldiers talked to them about good habits that would keep them healthy, including washing their hands and keeping bodily wastes away from where they lived. As Maryem chuckled about that with another woman from the village, her name was called to see the doctors. Immediately a knot came to her throat, as she never saw men from outside her family in a private setting. As she went into the treatment tent, however, her concern for Wakil overcame any doubts about social and religious appropriateness.

Inside the tent, the soldier who guided her there left as another Afghan man greeted her in the traditional fashion. He said his name was Wasil and that he was a doctor. He also introduced a Western woman who was from a group of Western doctors called Mercy Relief. There was also another Westerner in the room who wore a thick beard and was dressed in Afghan clothing. Wasil asked Maryem to put Wakil on the treatment table and asked what she thought was wrong with him. After a couple of minutes of taking vital signs from Wakil, the Westerner and Wasil spoke briefly. Then Wasil told Maryem that, while she was a good mother, her son was sick because of some worms inside of him that come from the human excrement that sometimes collects in the street and in the ditch where they get their water.

The doctor gave her some pills and instructions on how to give them to Wakil and sent her on her way. As she was leaving, she was given a new washbasin to take home with her. While still somewhat confused about what was going on, she knew one thing: the ANA, and thereby the government in Kabul, had probably saved the life of her son. As she was walking home and thinking about her experiences that morning, she had no idea that she had been a willing participant in a carefully scripted operation that was planned, resourced, and executed primarily by a 12-man U.S. Army Special Forces detachment. And that was the way it was supposed to be.¹

The above example is illustrative of the centrality of the use of civil-military operations to achieve progress in the U.S.-led Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) since Al Qaeda's attacks against the United States on 9/11. In particular, it demonstrates the importance of using confidence-building measures among villagers at the local level in order to assist the United States and its domestic allies (in this case, the ANA) to minimize support for Al Qaeda and its affiliates in a given state under reconstruction, in this case Afghanistan.

The Afghan example is just one of many such cases across the world that demonstrate the growing role of U.S. military special forces (active duty and reserve units alike) in microlevel civil-military operations designed to achieve progress in the GWOT, one village or town at a time, in places ranging geographically from Iraq and Yemen to Mongolia and the Philippines since the events of 9/11. The balance of this chapter examines these types of operations and the grand strategy upon which they are based. The first part of this discussion provides a conceptual overview of the use of civil-military operations to achieve strategic objectives. The second part analyzes civil-military operations in the context of the GWOT in particular. The third section examines case studies of U.S.-led civil-military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines, followed by an examination of the insights that U.S. policymakers should draw from these case studies. The concluding section provides some observations on the prospects for the future of the use of civil-military operations by the United States and its allies.

Civil-Military Operations as a Strategic Tool

Since the end of the Cold War, generally, and specifically after the events of 9/11, the United States has placed a progressively greater emphasis on the use of nation- or state-building projects to achieve its strategic objectives in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq.² One of the most indispensable tools available to achieve progress in

those projects, in turn, is the use of civil-military operations.³ In order to best explain how civil-military operations are employed by the United States in the contemporary international system, it is first important to review some commonly used definitions as a means to ground the reader in the terminology of the field.

At its core, humanitarian and civil assistance is defined as assistance provided to the local populace in a given state or locality therein by U.S. military forces in conjunction with their operations and exercises. Authorized under the auspices of Title 10, United States Code, Section 401, such assistance is limited to “(1) medical, dental, and veterinary care provided in rural areas of a country; (2) construction of rudimentary surface transportation systems; (3) well drilling and construction of basic sanitation facilities; and (4) rudimentary construction and repair of public facilities.”⁴ Each of these types of assistance has been provided by U.S. forces in a variety of nation- or state-building operations since the 1990s.

One component of humanitarian and civil assistance is military civic action (MCA), which the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) defines as the

use of preponderantly indigenous military forces on projects useful to the local population at all levels in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, communications, health, sanitation, and others contributing to economic and social development, which would also serve to improve the standing of the military forces with the population.⁵

The introductory section of the chapter, for instance, offers a clear example of MCA, designed to afford the ANA an opportunity to establish a favorable rapport with the local population early on in US-led nation- and state-building efforts that continue in Afghanistan a dozen years later, one likely to reduce the potential for support for Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters within the region where the medical clinic was administered.

The above operation in Afghanistan had parallels across the developing world generally and the greater Middle East and Asia specifically—both in 2002 as well as during the 1990s and 2000s–2010s, respectively. Examples include the contexts of Bosnia-Herzegovina (since 1995), Kosovo (since 1999), the Philippines (since 2001), and Iraq (since 2003).

The conduct of civil-military operations, whether by U.S. forces alone or in collaboration with indigenous actors in a particular state or region therein, is one method U.S. servicemen and women employ in order to achieve the broader goal of successful counterinsurgency. Such operations are considered one of the many different kinds of “military, paramilitary, political,

economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.”⁶ Civil-military operations can also be used to complement broader means of unconventional warfare, which the DOD described as

military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes guerrilla warfare and often direct offensive, low visibility, covert, or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence gathering, and escape and evasion.⁷

These conceptual definitions articulate the ways in which civil-military operations are expected to unfold in theory. In practice, carrying out such operations falls to individual military servicemen and women, who—as the case studies provided later in the chapter demonstrate—often face unanticipated circumstances on the ground in many kinds of operating environments. In general terms, an officer engaging in civil-military operations must establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces and civil authorities, both governmental and nongovernmental, and the civilian population in a friendly, neutral, or hostile area of operations in order to facilitate military operations and consolidate operational objectives. Civil affairs may also include the performance by military forces of activities and functions that are normally the responsibility of the local government. These activities may occur prior to, during, or subsequent to other military actions. They may also occur, if directed, in the absence of military operations. Ultimately, tasks as wide-ranging as providing for the basic survival needs of the residents of a village or town in the aftermath of a conflict to cobbling together a rudimentary political system—and, in some cases, serving (either formally or informally) as an official within that system—all fall under the aegis of civil affairs.

While civil-military operations have been an indispensable part of U.S. participation in nation- and/or state-building operations since the end of the Cold War and thus received considerably more attention in the academic and policymaking communities than was previously the case, they are by no means a new concept in the history of the U.S. military. The conduct of civil-military operations by U.S. forces dates to the nineteenth century, with the U.S. occupation of (and development of governmental institutions inside) the Philippines following its victory in the brief Spanish-American War of 1898 serving as the most notable example. The United States spent much of the quarter-century preceding the Spanish-American War establishing military bases across the globe generally and in

the developing world specifically, a process that brought U.S. forces into contact with a range of cultures in both war-fighting and civil capacities. The first U.S. base in the Pacific, for instance, was established on the atoll of Midway, which America annexed in 1867. The United States also secured the right to use the harbor of Pago Pago on the Samoan island of Tutuila in 1877, two years after signing a free trade treaty with the eight-island chain of Hawaii that represented the first step toward the eventual colonization and annexation of that entity.⁸ These Pacific bases added a greater sense of permanence to the global reach of U.S. sea power, which was itself already manifested in the formation of permanent squadrons in the Mediterranean (1815), West India and the Pacific (1822), Brazil and the South Atlantic (1826), East India (1835), and West Africa (1843). Each of these developments demonstrated the depth of the U.S. commitment to enhancing domestic power and security through expansion during a period when the United States was considered by its rivals abroad as more of an isolated Western hemispheric state rather than a challenger for global economic, military, and political influence and, eventually, hegemony. As American scholar Walter Russell Mead, an expert on the history of U.S. foreign policy, asserts, "In other words, during the period of American innocence and isolation, the United States had forces stationed on or near every major continent in the world; its navy was active in virtually every ocean, its troops saw combat on virtually every continent, and its foreign relations were in a perpetual state of crisis and turmoil."⁹

After occupying the Philippines in May 1898 and assisting the natives in overthrowing the Spanish colonial regime, the United States set about establishing a U.S.-style democratic government over the islands. The process did not proceed smoothly. Instead, an insurgency erupted in 1899, which the United States spent nearly three years subduing at the cost of the lives of 4,234 U.S. servicemen.¹⁰ The insurgency—which was instigated and carried out primarily, if not exclusively, by the Muslims inhabiting the southern half of the archipelago—served as a lesson that U.S. expansion, while generally beneficial for American domestic security, would always entail costs. The challenge for U.S. forces—one that they struggled to meet successfully—was to cultivate conciliatory relations with remote villages in the south through civil-military operations designed to increase access to medical care and opportunities for economic growth while combating the insurgents militarily. The strategy was effective in the short term; however, maintaining the necessary presence to follow through on such civil-military projects proved impractical over the long term.

Perhaps the most significant example of the successful use of civil-military measures to build stable, enduring democratic political institutions

following a devastating conflict came with the U.S.-led nation- or state-building efforts in the aftermath of World War II in Germany and Japan. Most significantly, the United States spent four years after the war helping to rebuild the West German economic and political systems under liberal democratic and capitalist economic auspices that culminated in the establishment of an independent Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949.¹¹ The U.S. military, and specifically General Lucius D. Clay, played critical roles in orchestrating the process, providing an example of the potential for civil-military operations in the modern era—albeit one that, as demonstrated later in this chapter, has not yet been replicated in the context of the GWOT.

Civil-Military Operations and the Global War on Terrorism

In March 2006, U.S. President George W. Bush delivered a speech before members of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, in which he discussed his administration's central foreign policy theme: enhancing the prospects for the liberal democratization of the greater Middle East and specifically Iraq. In his address, Bush emphasized his administration's strategy to protect the United States:

[This] strategy to protect America is based upon a clear premise: the security of our nation depends on the advance of liberty in other nations. On September 11, 2001, we saw that problems originating in a failed and oppressive state 7,000 miles away could bring murder and destruction to our country. We saw that dictatorships shelter terrorists, feed resentment and radicalism, and threaten the security of free nations. Democracies replace resentment with hope, democracies respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, democracies join the fight against terror. And so America is committed to an historic long-term goal: To secure the peace of the world, we seek the end of tyranny in our world. We are making progress in the march of freedom—and some of the most important progress has taken place in a region that has not known the blessings of liberty: the broader Middle East.¹²

The administration reiterated the president's point in the context of its second formal National Security Strategy (NSS), which was released the same month. In particular, the NSS states:

It is the policy of the United States to seek and support democratic movements and institutions in every culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. In the world today, the fundamental character of

regimes matters as much as the distribution of power among them. . . . Achieving this goal is the work of generations. The United States is in the early years of a long struggle, similar to what our country faced in the early years of the Cold War.¹³

The Bush administration's focus on its perceived need for liberal democratic reform across the greater Middle East grew initially out of Al Qaeda's devastating attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon on the outskirts of Washington, D.C., on 9/11. In short, Bush believed that creating opportunities for freedom of expression and economic growth within the states of the greater Middle East would reduce the support for terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda therein, especially over the long term. The first step toward achieving that end, in the administration's view, was to remove repressive regimes controlled by the Taliban in Afghanistan and then President Saddam Hussein in Iraq through the prosecution of Operation Enduring Freedom in the fall of 2001 and Operation Iraqi Freedom in the spring of 2003, respectively. The second step was to help create conditions for the development of enduring liberal democratic institutions, albeit ones with the capacity to accommodate domestic cultural and religious norms through the conduct of nation- or state-building operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Regrettably, although predictably, progress in each of those projects has been limited and has proceeded at a rather glacial pace, most notably so because of a lack of security—particularly in the heart of Iraq, where the vast majority of that state's previously powerful (and now economically and politically marginalized and embittered) minority Sunni community is situated. In the cases of both Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States and its allies have faced daunting nation- and state-building challenges from the very outset of intervention in those states in the fall of 2001 and spring of 2003, respectively.

Central to the Bush administration's strategy was the use of nation- or state-building projects—with an emphasis on civil-military operations therein—to reduce the number of “weak,” “fragile,” “failing,” and “failed” states in the international system, especially in the greater Middle East, as a means to decrease the pool of recruits and potential bases of operation for terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda.¹⁴ The administration placed an emphasis on the use of civil-military operations and cooperation between the DOD and U.S. Department of State (DOS) in NSS documents it developed and implemented during each of Bush's terms in office. In particular, the 2006 NSS points to the importance of the establishment of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization at the DOS, characterizing it as an institution that “draws on all agencies of the government

and integrates its activities with our military's efforts" and one that coordinates its activities with U.S. allies and international organizations such as the European Union (EU) and United Nations.¹⁵ Further, the NSS points to the DOD's 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, which calls for expansion of U.S. Special Operations Forces.¹⁶ Such forces have been indispensable to the conduct of civil-military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines, specifically in the past five years.

The administration's approach, which was employed with varying degrees of success in both Afghanistan and Iraq, is part of the broader transformation of the U.S. military that was launched by the DOD at the start of Bush's first term in January 2001 and has continued in the years since, including under the Obama administration. The initial calls for that transformation came concurrent with (and, to an extent, as a result of) the end of the Cold War, which left the United States and its European allies to deal with interrelated instability and intrastate conflict in places ranging from the Caribbean and the Balkans to sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia.

The result was the emergence of a concept known in military parlance as "Fourth Generation Warfare." This concept is important to understanding the effects of civil-military operations on the modern battlefield. In a 1994 article in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, William S. Lind, Col. Keith Nightengale, Capt. John F. Schmitt, Col. Joseph W. Sutton, and Lt. Col. Gary I. Wilson presented a description of this type of warfare, noting that

beginning with Mao's initial concept that political power was more decisive than military power and progressing to the intifada's total reliance on the mass media and international networks to neutralize Israeli military power, warfare has undergone a fundamental change. The fourth generation has arrived. Strategically, it attempts to directly change the minds of enemy policymakers. This change is not to be achieved through the traditional method of superiority on the battlefield. Rather, it is to be accomplished through the superior use of all the networks available in the information age. These networks are employed to carry specific messages to enemy policymakers. A sophisticated opponent can even tailor the message to a specific audience and a specific strategic situation.¹⁷

In their article, Lind, Nightengale, Schmitt, Sutton, and Wilson suggested that this new generation of war would: (a) be fought in a complex arena of low-intensity conflict; (b) include tactics and techniques from earlier generations; (c) be fought across the spectrum of political, social, economic, and military networks; (d) be fought worldwide through these networks; and (e) involve a mix of national, international, transnational,

and subnational actors. Building on that approach in a subsequent piece, Thomas X. Hammes stressed that the United States'

national security capabilities are designed to operate within a nation-state framework. Outside that framework, they have great difficulties. The drug war provides an example. Because the drug traffic has no nation-state base, it is very difficult to attack. The nation-state shields the drug lords but cannot control them. We cannot attack them without violating the sovereignty of a friendly nation. A fourth-generation attacker could well operate in a similar manner, as some Middle Eastern terrorists already do.¹⁸

One example of these efforts involves the use of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Used initially in the context of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan and composed of U.S. military and civil government representatives to support regional reconstruction and development, these teams are now being run by other OEF partners with comparable composition. The concept has also been utilized in nation- or state-building operations in Iraq since 2004. PRTs are intended to provide a security umbrella under which other members of civil society (e.g., relief and development nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]) can operate and bring their resources to bear. They have also been the main effort in developing closer ties to local Afghan political and religious leaders, officials and others of significance, and involved unilateral operations to support health, education, and general living condition improvement. At the broader strategic level, the DOD has incorporated civil-military measures through the use of PRTs in particular into its own doctrine, as evidenced in policy documents such as the *National Defense Strategy of the United States* in March 2005, which called for U.S. forces to develop "ways to strengthen their language and civil affairs capabilities as required for specific deployments."¹⁹

However, in order to function effectively, PRTs must be utilized selectively with due consideration given to the cultural norms in the area in which they are deployed. Consider, for instance, the timeless advice provided by English Arabist T. E. Lawrence in his classic treatise *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, which was written concurrently with Britain's efforts to maintain control over its colonial possessions in the Middle East in the late 19th and early 20th centuries:

It seemed that rebellion must have an unassailable base, something guarded not merely from attack, but from the fear of it: such a base as we had in the Red Sea Parts, the desert, or in the minds of the men we converted to our creed. It must have a sophisticated alien enemy, in the form of a disciplined

army of occupation too small to fulfill the doctrine of acreage: too few to adjust number to space, in order to dominate the whole area effectively from fortified posts. It must have a friendly population, not actively friendly, but sympathetic to the point of not betraying rebel movements to the enemy.²⁰

Lawrence's advice is particularly well taken when one examines the challenges American forces face in combating precisely the types of insurgent movements to which he refers. The following section of this chapter will discuss the civil-military side of the struggle against such foes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines since the events of 9/11.

Civil-Military Operations in Practice: Three Case Studies

The cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines help to illustrate both the utility of the civil-military operations to achieve progress in the GWOT and the many daunting challenges associated with such efforts. These cases show that not only are civil-military operations necessary to fulfill international obligations (such as the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, articles 47–79, concerning the protection of civilians during conflict), but that they are used as part of efforts to achieve operational objectives on the battlefield. Moreover, civil-military operations are more effective in achieving the desired effects when they are the main effort as opposed to being a supporting effort.

Afghanistan

Just under two months after Al Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Arlington, VA, the United States launched OEF. The operation was designed to eliminate the Taliban regime that had played host to Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and to capture or kill as many of the leaders of both groups as possible. While the OEF did not result in the capture or death of Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, who was eventually killed in a U.S. Navy SEAL operation in May 2011, it did remove the Taliban from power, which helped to set the stage for the development of democratic political institutions in Afghanistan.²¹ The conduct of civil-military operations by a range of U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) units has been central to continuing efforts to both root out the remaining Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters and create the necessary conditions for the establishment of enduring democratic governance and viable and trustworthy national military and policing institutions across Afghanistan's ethnically disparate and geographically remote—and often

inhospitable—regions. However, the ultimate outcome of nation- and state-building efforts in Afghanistan will be determined over the long term, well after the vast majority of U.S. forces are withdrawn at the end of 2014.

The U.S. approach to the interconnected hunt for Bin Laden and his supporters, and the development of liberal democratic governmental institutions and capable domestic security forces in Afghanistan, is demonstrative of an ongoing DOD transformation that favors relatively small deployments of highly trained special operations forces numbering in the thousands, as opposed to the large-scale deployments in the hundreds of thousands of servicemen and women that was the norm prior to the events of 9/11. U.S. forces often deployed to forward-operating “firebases” in remote regions, where they used collaborative patrols with ANA units and humanitarian projects, such as the medical clinic described in the introduction to this piece, to generate goodwill and gather useful intelligence at the village level. Ultimately, the strategic thinking at work is that by creating such goodwill, the United States and the Afghan government can reduce grassroots support for Al Qaeda and the Taliban and eventually liquidate the remnants of both.²²

At its core, the U.S. strategies of both President Bush and President Obama require time and patience to produce results, especially if judged at the macro level, where such results are not easy to discern in the short term. Much of the criticism of the Bush administration’s performance in Afghanistan grew out of its failure to capture or kill Bin Laden or create enduring stability throughout that state. That criticism, however, does not take into account myriad examples of success in reconstruction projects and humanitarian operations at the micro level. Consider, for example, the efforts of the Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) within Combined Joint Task Force 180, which was headquartered at Baghram Air Base just north of Kabul while U.S. operations were underway in Afghanistan from 2003 to 2014. Composed primarily of U.S. Army Special Forces units, the JSOTF operated a series of forward firebases in the Afghan countryside, most notably in the southeastern region of the country bordering Pakistan, where Al Qaeda and Taliban forces are most active. Its operators grew thick beards and donned the Afghan kerchiefs common among natives of the region. Put simply, they did whatever possible to adapt to and, ideally, become a part of the cultural environs in which they were deployed, which proved beneficial in building a measure of trust through repeated interactions with Afghan villagers over time.²³ Regarding military operations in Afghanistan since the fall of 2001, there are two general categories of supporting civil-military operations that can be examined to

extract some details of previously executed civil-military operations. The first category encompasses those operations conducted by special operations forces other than civil affairs units. The other category includes those civil-military operations that emanate from the provincial reconstruction teams found throughout the Afghan countryside, usually conducted or otherwise facilitated by civil affairs units.

During the normal course of operations in Afghanistan, U.S. Army Special Forces units routinely provide humanitarian assistance, interact with the local government, or otherwise conduct civil-military operations. While there are many types of operations being conducted there by U.S. SOF, the overarching type of operation being conducted is called unconventional warfare (UW). According to the DOD, UW is “a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery.”²⁴ During the course of UW, U.S. SOF units conduct (either unilaterally or with the support of civil affairs units) various operations that support the overall objectives of supporting the Afghan government, all the while seeking out the enemy wherever they are and destroying them.

One specialized tactic employed by U.S. SOF is that of military civic action (MCA), defined in the U.S. Army Field Manual *FM 3-05.401—Civil Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures* as the “use of preponderantly indigenous military forces on projects useful to the local population at all levels in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, communications, health, sanitation, etc., contributing to economic and social development, which would also serve to improve the standing of the military forces with the population.”²⁵ Basically, U.S. SOF conduct an operation where all the good outcomes appear to be the result of the efforts of the Afghan government. An example of this tactic being used in the field is in the training of the Afghan National Army. During the training, U.S. SOF used MCA “in order to support the legitimacy of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan (TISA), provide non-combat leadership opportunities prior to confidence missions, as well as to provide training in handling the Afghan civilian populace.”²⁶ One technique that was often used to accomplish this was the Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP). During the course of the training program for newly established Afghan army units, a MEDCAP was planned to be executed by the Afghan unit in an area that was relatively pacified. In conjunction with

nongovernmental relief organization partners, U.S. SOF facilitated and ensured the success of what appeared to the public to be an Afghan event to provide health care, public sanitation, education, and similar support to a remote village, a needy neighborhood, or other like entity. During the course of deployment, the U.S. Army 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces unit, used this tactic frequently with impressive results in improving the legitimacy of the Afghan government and its army.²⁷ Another specific example of this occurred at the Kabul Children's Hospital. The Afghan National Army's 3rd Brigade regularly visits the hospital to provide needed supplies and toys for the children.²⁸

One of the signature tactics from the OEF is the use of PRTs. Typically based in the capital of the province they are supporting, these military teams provide the coalition and the Afghan government the ability to "extend the authority of the Afghan central government, promote and enhance security, and facilitate humanitarian relief and reconstruction operations"²⁹ PRTs are critical to removing internal hiding places and sanctuaries for the insurgents; this is particularly true concerning the PRTs located in the provinces neighboring Pakistan. The nature of the conditions of the border region, particularly noncentrally governed Pakistani border provinces, makes these areas more important because of the transit of people, money, and supplies that are intended to support the insurgency. As is typical of any insurgency, the auxiliaries of the insurgency usually live undercover (and sometimes in the open) within the general population and run the "underground" support structures of the insurgency, such as "ratlines" (surreptitious networks of routes and safe houses used by the insurgents to support operations). The PRTs in Afghanistan are typically staffed with military and civilian reconstruction specialists. Additionally, the PRTs are staffed with combat soldiers who secure the PRTs' base, as well as provide force protection for the reconstruction specialists when they are performing their duties "outside the wire." When appropriate, PRTs support tactical units' mission objectives within their operating area, but are essentially the main effort for nonlethal supportive effects for the province.

In large part because of civil-military operations carried out by SOF units, the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies have made some progress in creating a more stable and democratic Afghanistan. For instance, the state has had a democratically elected president and parliament since the autumns of 2004 and 2005, and in 2014 the country saw its first peaceful transition of power from one elected leader to another. Yet, it is also clear that much work remains to be done. Above all, the problem is that maintaining order in ethnically and tribally diverse

regions is a difficult task, one that demands a commitment that may last decades and is best measured locally in a particular region or village rather than at the broader national level, where any manifestation of violence in one place or another tends to trump more positive but less sensationalistic success stories elsewhere.

Iraq

In March and April 2003, the United States removed from power the regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in less than a month through the conduct of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).³⁰ In terms of war fighting, the operation was nearly flawless. The challenges faced by U.S. forces in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Baghdad and in the context of U.S.-led nation- or state-building operations in Iraq in the years since then, on the other hand, have been considerably more daunting. As with Afghanistan, the conduct of civil-military operations has been indispensable to the progress achieved in terms of economics, politics, and security at the local level in towns and villages across Iraq. However, unlike the situation in Afghanistan, especially in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the regime, civil-military tasks fell in many cases to servicemen and women who lacked the training to carry out such tasks and thus simply adapted to the circumstances they faced on the ground.

The U.S. military “footprint” in Iraq from 2003 to 2011 was markedly larger than that in Afghanistan, and organized resistance to the U.S. occupation was comparable, if not considerably greater. In short, both the challenges faced by U.S. forces and the stakes associated with success and failure in Iraq increased at a proportionally higher rate than in Afghanistan, particularly between March 2003 and January 2007. Two of the most significant reasons for this are the emphasis placed on pursuing nation- or state-building operations in Iraq by the Bush administration and countering efforts by domestic insurgents and foreign fighters aligned with Al Qaeda to undermine those operations. Collectively, these factors raised the relative costs of the U.S. presence in Iraq, resulting in the deaths of nearly 4,500 U.S. servicemen and women there since March 2003.³¹

The extent of the troop presence in Iraq—and consistent calls by some critics of the Bush administration to increase that presence—grew out of a broader debate within the DOD over the manner in which military forces should or should not be utilized in nation- or state-building projects. Generally speaking, one side of this debate does not think the military should play a central role in nation- or state-building projects; its proponents suggest, instead, that U.S. forces should focus much more on traditional war-fighting tasks, which those forces carried out quite effectively in the OIF.

Those on the other side of the debate recognized the importance of using nation- or state-building projects—and civil-military operations therein—to reduce the number of failing and failed states in the greater Middle East and diminish the capabilities of terrorist groups in that region.³²

As is true of Afghanistan, the conduct of civil-military operations resulted in some progress in terms of the development of physical infrastructure and political institutions in selected cases at the local level, but projects such as the reconstruction of schools and negotiation of power-sharing arrangements on village councils are typically overshadowed by the daily violence generated by the insurgency, particularly since the United States withdrew its forces in December 2011. Regrettably, regardless of how many schools one builds or public works projects one launches, these types of endeavors simply do not generate the same extent of media coverage as the detonation of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings by insurgents with roots inside and outside of Iraq.³³

If one examines the situation in Iraq closely enough, there were myriad examples of progress as a result of the actions of U.S. servicemen and women in the contexts of civil-military operations at the local level. Consider, for instance, the case of U.S. Army Major James A. Gavrilis, whose 12-man SOF team established a functioning municipal democracy in Ar Rutbah, a Sunni city of 25,000 in the Anbar province of Iraq near the Syrian and Jordanian borders. Working closely with civil administrators, policemen, and tribal leaders, Gavrilis's unit orchestrated the development of representative political institutions and public services that were staffed and administered by the citizens of the town.³⁴ This is an example that has been replicated in locales across Iraq. Yet, the extent of the violence in Iraq since the U.S. withdrawal suggests that to sustain the benefits of such efforts, there are enduring challenges that must be overcome.

The Philippines

Roughly concurrent with the prosecution of the OEF and its aftermath in Afghanistan, U.S. forces were also carrying out a Southeast Asian component of the GWOT several thousand miles to the east in the Philippines. In the days and weeks following the events of 9/11, Bush and the members of his national security team emphasized repeatedly that the GWOT was indeed a global struggle and would be approached as such by the United States. U.S. efforts in the Philippines represented one of the first clear examples of the application of the administration's "global" approach in practice.³⁵ Similar to its strategy in Afghanistan, the United States sought to minimize terrorist threats to U.S. interests emanating from the Philippines by using civil-military operations to reduce support for Al Qaeda affiliate

Abu Sayyaf in the jungles of the southern islands of that Asian archipelago.³⁶ Since January 2002, on Mindanao—the largest of the Muslim-majority islands in the Philippines—and neighboring Basilan Island, U.S. Army Special Forces units have led the effort in using various types of civil-military operations as part of a campaign to reduce the strongholds of Abu Sayyaf by isolating the terrorists from the civilian population that they need for logistical support and a pool of recruits. As noted earlier in the chapter, the Muslims of the south—culturally and religiously isolated from the Roman Catholic majority in the northern half of the Philippines—mounted a fierce insurgency against U.S. forces in the aftermath of the U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898, one that was not fully quelled until 1913. Nearly a century later, the United States faces a comparable challenge—one, as is the case in Afghanistan, it has confronted collaboratively with the Philippine military over the past decade.

Originally administered by Joint Task Force 510, U.S. operations in the Philippines in the context of the GWOT now come under the umbrella of the JSOTF, which is headquartered in the town of Zamboanga, just across a narrow strait from Basilan Island. The OEF-Philippines commenced in January 2002 with a “force cap” of 600, negotiated by officials in Washington and Manila. While substantially smaller than the U.S. presence in Afghanistan, some of the methods used by special operations units in Zamboanga and on Basilan Island are comparable. Most significantly, U.S. units have worked with troops from the Philippine Army in conducting MEDCAPs designed to improve sanitation and address related health concerns in villages situated in the thick tropical jungles on Mindanao and Basilan. The problem, as in Afghanistan, is that building confidence among villagers fearful of reprisals from Abu Sayyaf is a time-consuming task that requires persistent follow-up on behalf of Philippine forces. The extent to which that will occur over the long term remains open to debate.³⁷ As Robert Kaplan—a correspondent at *Atlantic Monthly* who spent nearly three years living and working with U.S. military units stationed in places as wide ranging as Colombia, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Yemen, and Mongolia—explains:

The ostensible mission was to help Philippine troops kill international terrorists. But that was accomplished by orchestrating a humanitarian assistance campaign, which severed the link between the terrorists and the rest of the Muslim population—exactly what successful middle level commanders had done in the Philippines a hundred years before. . . . [But] America could not change the vast forces of history and culture that had placed a poor Muslim region at the southern edge of a badly governed, Christian-run

archipelago nation, just as America could not clap its hands and give governments in the mountains of Colombia and Yemen complete control over their lawless lowlands.³⁸

Different from both Iraq and Afghanistan, civil-military operations in the Philippines are almost all under the auspices of the Coalition JSOTF and U.S. Army Special Forces. As part of the counterinsurgency campaign being conducted there, civil-military operations are integral, albeit supporting efforts in the Philippines.³⁹ Civil-military operations in the OEF-Philippines have been conducted in order to build government legitimacy and control, which is a significant effort (if not the main effort) as part of any counterinsurgency campaign. It is important to note that in the Philippines, the feedback from postoperational assessments led to different techniques being used in different locations, even though those locations were only a few miles apart.

For example, in one village on Basilan Island, the most effective way to promote government legitimacy was the provision of better education. Meanwhile, in a village close by, views toward the government were improved by the construction of a well. Similar observations have been made in Iraq and Afghanistan and reinforce the tactic of gathering information at the lowest level for the purposes of operational assessment.

As with the two other theaters, MEDCAPs are an important component of the overall strategy for promoting government legitimacy and thereby removing safe havens for insurgents and terrorists. As a “carrot” in the carrot-and-stick approach to nation building, MEDCAPs and other forms of humanitarian aid are essential to establishing (or reestablishing) the power of the central government and circumventing other forms of authority in a particular area. As with previously described programs in Afghanistan and Iraq, MEDCAPs are excellent opportunities for military civic action projects, where the host nation (in this case, the government of the Philippines) receives most—if not all—of the credit for any humanitarian aid or development project.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Using Civil-Military Operations in the War on Terrorism

Above all, U.S. policymakers can draw several insights from U.S. participation in and use of civil-military operations in the conduct of nation- or state-building projects since the end of the Cold War generally and in the context of the GWOT in particular—each of which is discussed in the following section of this chapter. First, nation- or state-building projects are at present (and will remain) central to U.S. efforts to reduce the

number of failing and failed states in the international system. However, given the economic and physical costs involved, the likelihood that the United States will expand ongoing nation- and/or state-building efforts or commit to new ones moving forward is declining markedly. Second, the military will continue to play an indispensable role in such operations when they do occur, most notably so through the deployment of special operations teams with capabilities in the interconnected issue areas of security, civil affairs and humanitarian crisis management, and intelligence gathering. Third, at the broader strategic level, the military must accept—if not embrace—the need for adaptation in dealing with the complex blend of war-fighting and civil affairs tasks conducted in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Fourth, achieving success in nation- or state-building operations will demand more effective coordination between U.S. military officers and civilian officials—as well as between those actors and representatives of international and NGOs—in the planning and implementation of those operations. Fifth, U.S. leaders and policymakers will need to do a better job of selling nation- or state-building projects and civil-military operations therein to the general public as essential means to securing U.S. interests in the future.

Centrality of Nation- or State-Building to the Pursuit of U.S. Interests

In the aftermath of the Cold War and subsequent victory of U.S. and coalition forces over Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, U.S. civilian and military policymakers faced an uncertain situation in terms of the types of threats and resultant operations they would have to plan for and implement in the succeeding years. The 1992–1995 civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and ensuing use of NATO forces in postconflict reconstruction operations therein served as a preview of what was to come. In short, intervention in Bosnia demonstrated to the William J. Clinton administration that nation- or state-building projects are time-consuming undertakings that do not lend themselves to concrete exit strategies but are necessary to minimize the dangers of failing and failed states in regions deemed vital to the interests of the United States and its allies. For their part, the events of 9/11—which were planned and orchestrated by Al Qaeda from bases of operations in the failed state of Afghanistan—led to the Bush administration's assessment that, despite its earlier misgivings about the use of military forces in nation- or state-building operations, such projects would be essential to making progress toward its vision of political reform in the greater Middle East. However, with the U.S. military presence in Iraq now all but nonexistent and all but 10,000 American forces set to withdraw

from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, Washington's participation in future nation- and state-building efforts will likely be far more limited than during the 1990s and 2000s.

Role of the Military in Nation- or State-Building Operations

Notwithstanding differences of opinion among military leaders over whether U.S. forces should play a major role beyond the provision of security in the contexts of nation- or state-building projects, such forces did participate in a range of civil and traditional war-fighting tasks on the ground in both Afghanistan and Iraq. On balance, the military has done well in performing those tasks, particularly when one examines the efforts of individual officers and units in local contexts rather than focusing on the lack of effective preinvasion planning in the Pentagon that complicated the management of the occupation and administration of occupied Iraq, following the successful elimination of Saddam's regime. The ongoing debate in the DOD over the transformation of the military is one that will necessarily focus on the increasing importance of civil-military operations as a tool to achieve progress in the physical reconstruction and economic and political transformation of failing and failed states such as Afghanistan and Iraq. Ultimately, military policymakers must recognize that the post-conflict stages of the wars of the 21st century will be as important as (or perhaps more than) the operations that created the opportunity for economic, political, and social reforms through regime change in the first place.

The Need for Operational Adaptation in the Transformation of the Military

One of the most daunting challenges U.S. servicemen and women—whether officers or members of the enlisted ranks—face when conducting civil-military operations is the need to adapt as circumstances dictate while dealing with the bureaucratic minutiae of an often complex chain of command. Such difficulties are most problematic when decisions at the level of an individual unit or forward operating base must be sent on to headquarters for approval in a given area of operations (say Afghanistan, Iraq, or the Philippines). Without greater freedom of action, operations in a particular village in an isolated region can be much more difficult to carry out expeditiously and effectively. As a general rule, it is prudent to afford SOF units as much flexibility as possible in planning and carrying out civil-military strategies in the localities where they have been deployed and have thus developed an expertise often lacking at the higher levels of command in the theater in which the U.S. military has established a larger

footprint. The more interaction U.S. forces have with the indigenous population in a village or town, the better. Unfortunately, sometimes the rules of engagement set by commanders at the more overarching strategic levels limit that type of interaction as a result of the inherent security risks involved. Above all, it would be useful to move toward a culture in which U.S. servicemen and women are afforded more freedom of action to adapt to local circumstances rather than being forced to wait for specific orders of precisely what to do and when to do it. Additionally, it is essential that they receive the requisite training to adapt to the cultural environment within which they are operating at a given juncture.

Collaboration and Coordination between Military and Civilian Officials and Organizations

While it is essential that U.S. armed forces play a role in the conduct of nation- or state-building operations, it is also clear that U.S. civilian agencies, such as the DOS and U.S. Agency for International Development, must contribute a great deal as well. The same is true of international organizations and NGOs. Carrying out an effective civil-military operation, whether building a school or setting up a clinic to provide medical treatment in a remote mountain town in Afghanistan or jungle village in the Philippines, typically demands contributions from several, if not all, of the above actors. Collaboration and coordination among those actors, on the other hand, is often difficult to achieve, both at the policymaking level and in practice on the ground in a given state. Both the DOS and DOD have placed increasing emphasis on the issue area of postconflict reconstruction and nation- or state-building since the events of 9/11. They must continue to focus on that issue area and encourage interaction among representatives of government agencies, the military, international organizations, NGOs, and the academic communities to develop ever-better strategies for the humanitarian and civil-military components of nation- or state-building in the future.

Selling an Evolving Approach to the Public

One of the greatest challenges associated with nation- or state-building projects in general, and civil-military operations specifically, is in promoting those concepts to the U.S. public with a limited attention span for foreign and security affairs unless directly threatened at home. The events of 9/11 led to a greater awareness of the international system broadly and of weak, fragile, failing, and failed states in the greater Middle East in particular. However, it is much more difficult to transform that interest into support for concepts such as nation- or state-building and civil-military

operations, with which the public is not familiar and unwilling to advocate if it is perceived to entail a substantial financial cost to the government (and thus the taxpayers). In short, unless there is a sense within the U.S. public that the threats posed by terrorists are as significant as was the case in the aftermath of Al Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and also that creating an atmosphere conducive to economic growth and democratic reforms through nation- or state-building in foreign lands will reduce those threats, apathy and disinterest (if not outright opposition) toward such concepts is likely to be the prevalent sentiment among Americans. Consequently, above all else, nation- or state-building and civil-military operations must be linked to security in order to achieve even a measure of support within the U.S. population.

Conclusions

During the Cold War, most dangers the United States had to counter grew out of its adversarial relationship with the Soviet Union. Since the end of that bipolar struggle, by contrast, U.S. presidents have had to respond to challenges related to the emergence of weak, fragile, failing, and failed states that threaten military security, economic vitality, and political stability in regions deemed vital to the interests of the United States and its allies. These entities have been of particular concern to U.S. policymakers since the 1990s. The Clinton and Bush administrations both intervened militarily in states that could be defined as fragile, failing or failed in terms of governmental maintenance of, control over, or humane treatment of their populations. The former took action in Bosnia in the summer and fall of 1995 and Kosovo in the spring of 1999 and the latter in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001 and Iraq in the spring of 2003. In each case, the use of force was followed by the conduct of postconflict civil-military operations that have since been defined as nation- or state-building endeavors.

The use of civil-military tools in the conduct of nation- or state-building projects is, by no means, a new concept. It was, for example, employed effectively in the transformation of Germany and Japan from dictatorships to democracies in the aftermath of World War II. However, both the frequency of the application of nation- or state-building operations and the threats such projects are designed to counter have changed markedly over the past decade. The primary purpose of the Clinton administration's participation in nation- or state-building operations in the Balkans was to ensure political stability in a region adjacent to the borders of member states of NATO and the EU. Both the Bush and Obama administrations, on the other hand, supported the reconstruction and democratization of Afghanistan and played

the lead role in nation- or state-building operations in Iraq in order to reduce the threats posed to U.S. interests by terrorists and their sponsors in two ways: first, by replacing regimes that supported Al Qaeda either directly or indirectly and, second, by improving the standard of living of—and affording political freedom to—the people of the greater Middle East.

Above all, the Bush administration believed that the physical and economic reconstruction and political liberalization of Iraq would prove absolutely indispensable to the broader transformation of the Islamic world. That much Bush emphasized repeatedly during the 2000s. In April 2004, for instance, Bush stressed that

a free Iraq will stand as an example to reformers across the Middle East. A free Iraq will show that America is on the side of Muslims who wish to live in peace, as we have already shown in Kuwait [by way of the conduct of the 1990–1991 Persian Gulf War] and Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan. A free Iraq will confirm to a watching world that America's word, once given, can be relied upon, even in the toughest of times.⁴⁰

Bush's remarks opened a nationally televised press conference addressing the many challenges associated with nation- and state-building in Iraq. The president's comments were demonstrative of two underlying points. First, Bush recognized at that juncture that the transformation of Iraq continued to present economic, military, and political roadblocks that would take years, if not decades, rather than weeks or months, to overcome. Second, he emphasized the importance of seeing the Iraqi nation- or state-building project through to completion, implying that subsequent administrations should maintain the commitment to the broader liberalization and democratization of the Greater Middle East over the long term. Regrettably, given the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and drawdown in Afghanistan, and subsequent turmoil and seizure of significant territory in the former state by a radical extremist organization—the Islamic State—the latter objective appears less and less likely to be realized.

At the core of insurgent efforts to undermine nation-building operations in Iraq is the fear that the United States will establish an enduring free market economy and representative government there. That outcome could eventually lead to two developments that dictatorial regimes and terrorist groups alike would abhor: an improved standard of living for members of the lower classes of society and the creation of a political atmosphere in which individuals are free to elect—and, if they choose, criticize—those in power. With Iraq as a model, other countries possessing autocratic characteristics comparable to those of Saddam's former regime

(examples range from Islamic states, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, to more secular-oriented states such as Egypt and Syria) could be the next candidates for economic and political transformation.

U.S. efforts to promote democratic change in Afghanistan and Iraq scare the leaders of both autocratic states and terrorist organizations, including Al Qaeda and its affiliates. There are two reasons why. First, those groups thrive on discontent, if not outright desperation, to recruit members willing to sacrifice their lives to battle the adversaries they blame for the dearth of economic growth and political freedom prevalent across much of the Arab world. One such adversary (the United States) is perceived by many Muslims to be responsible for the majority of these shortcomings. Should Bush, Obama—or, for that matter, any other U.S. president—manage to use a successful transformation of Iraq to start the engine of reform at the broader regional level, the pool of terrorist recruits could decrease substantially. Second, while Islamic extremists also seek the elimination of the present governments in control of states throughout the Middle East, they would prefer that those changes come under their auspices. That would, of course, allow them to take control and install equally repressive regimes, which they could then administer in a style similar to that of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The establishment of representative democracies, by contrast, would encourage the free expression of dissent to prevent the development of any type of autocracy, whether Islamic or secular in character. The emergence of the Islamic State in particular is demonstrative of one extraordinarily threatening alternative. That organization, which emerged after the expulsion of its predecessor, Al Qaeda, in Iraq through an alliance between the U.S. forces and influential Sunni tribes in the Anbar Province, in particular, reconstituted itself amid the Arab Spring political reform movement in 2011–2012 in Syria.

Putting forward the effort to overcome these hurdles—and accepting the requisite economic, military, and political costs that accumulate along the way—will provide an opportunity to alter the broader relationship between Islam and the West in an equally favorable manner. The United States has embraced comparably daunting challenges in the past, most notably its commitment in the aftermath of World War II to the idea of a Europe whole and free. That project is now nearly 70 years old and gradually nearing completion, with the EU and NATO both moving forward with their most recent enlargement processes in 2004. Without the economic, military, and political sacrifices the Americans and Western Europeans made during the Cold War, the European continent, too, might not have gained the freedoms that recent U.S. presidential administrations have hoped to spread to the greater Middle East.

Acknowledgments

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. government.

Notes

1. This account is based on the personal experiences of U.S. Army Special Forces Maj. Robert Redding, who was stationed in Afghanistan in 2002–2003.

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10. Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 99–128; Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts*, 136–42.

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Part III: Case Studies

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Countering Terrorism in Latin America

The Case of Shining Path in Peru

David Scott Palmer

BEGINNING IN MAY 1980, THE GOVERNMENT OF Peru faced the first attacks from a Maoist insurgency originating in the Andean highlands known as Shining Path, attacks that expanded dramatically over the decade.¹ By 1990, more than 20,000 Peruvians had been killed, \$10 billion of infrastructure had been damaged or destroyed, and some 900,000 internal refugees and emigrants had fled their homes.² However, with a series of changes in counterinsurgency strategy and tactics, beginning in 1989, the government finally began to gain the upper hand in this conflict. The turning point came with the capture of the movement's leader, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, in September 1992; within three years, the insurgency ceased to pose a serious threat to the Peruvian state.

This chapter offers an abbreviated account of the rise and fall of Shining Path. It discusses the conditions contributing to the initial formation and growth of the insurgency, the largely counterproductive responses by the Peruvian government and its security forces, and the key elements of the major strategic and tactical overhaul that turned the tables on the insurgents. The conclusion draws together the lessons to be learned as to how a guerrilla movement could come close to succeeding and how a besieged

government could overcome the threat, lessons of possible use to other governments in the formulation of their own counterterrorism policies.

Explaining the Rise of Shining Path

Since Peru's independence in the 1820s, the military has played a central role in politics and government. Civilian-led democracy has been the exception, and most political parties have been personalist, populist, and poorly institutionalized. Between 1968 and 1980, a reformist military regime attempted to transform Peru through major social, economic, and political reform.³ The self-titled Revolutionary Military Government (RMG) was ultimately unsuccessful, most importantly because it attempted too much with too few resources. By the time military officials, chastened by their experience with long-term rule, agreed to turn power back to the civilians between 1978 and 1980, the multiple parties of the Marxist left were major political players, particularly in unions and universities.⁴ With Peru's first presidential elections in 17 years in 1980, also the first ever with universal suffrage, the political landscape dramatically changed.

Into this unlikely political context the radical Maoist guerrillas of the Partido Comunista del Perú-Sendero Luminoso (the Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path, or PCP-SL) also emerged.⁵ In what seemed a quixotic folly at the time, Shining Path launched its self-declared "peoples' war" on the eve of the most open and democratic elections in Peru's political history.⁶ A decade later, however, the guerrillas had Peru's democracy on the verge of collapse.

How can we explain such a development? Of the multiple forces and factors in play, one set of explanations relates to the origins, nature, and dynamics of Shining Path itself; another, to the policies and mind-set of various Peruvian governments from the 1960s through the 1980s.

How Shining Path Formed and Grew

One important element is that the group that eventually became known as Shining Path began and took root in the early 1960s, largely out of public view in Ayacucho, a remote and isolated department (state) of highland Peru. While a very important region historically, there had been only sporadic and limited central government attention to the area for many years. As a result, the group and its leadership could operate and expand almost unperceived by the outside world for close to two decades before launching military operations.⁷

Second, the original ancestor of Shining Path started at the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga (UNSCH) in this department's capital. While the university dated from the 1670s, it had been closed for almost 80 years before being refounded in 1959 with a mission then unique to Peruvian institutions of higher education—the promotion of development in the region.⁸

Third, the opportunity to carry out such a mission attracted a number of Peru's best scholars, as well as a few with a more political agenda. Among the latter was the young Communist Party militant Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, later to become the head of Shining Path. Within a few months of his arrival in 1962, he revitalized the almost moribund local Communist Party organization and established his presence in the still small university (about 400 students and 40 faculty). As a committed and charismatic professor of the left, he was able, over the next few years, to build a powerful Marxist student organization that gained control of the university in 1968 elections. The UNSCH, with over 5,000 students by 1970, then served even more than before as a forum, incubator, and launching platform for the expansion of Guzmán's increasingly radical organization and ideology.⁹

Fourth, given the extreme poverty and the indigenous peasant-dominated nature of Ayacucho, it is no surprise that Guzmán sided with China after the Sino-Soviet split of 1963–1964. With this new ideological commitment, he successfully built a strong Maoist party both within the university and in the countryside, especially among primary school teachers.¹⁰

A fifth important factor revolved around Guzmán's relationship with the Chinese. He and his principal lieutenants made extended trips to China between 1965 and 1975, in the midst of the Cultural Revolution, and became adherents of the most radical faction in that struggle, the Gang of Four. When their Chinese mentors lost out in 1976, PCP-SL was cast adrift. Totally radicalized by his Chinese experience, Guzmán concluded that only a properly directed people's war in Peru could bring about a true revolution.¹¹

A sixth element was voluntarism. Although objective conditions for the armed struggle did not exist in Peru in early 1980, Guzmán concluded that Lenin's voluntarist dictum could be appropriately applied. By launching the peoples' war at this moment, he believed, its actions would create over time more favorable objective conditions for revolutionary expansion.¹²

A seventh factor related to Shining Path's quest for the military resources to sustain its peoples' war. In the early years, Shining Path secured guns,

ammunition, and dynamite through raids on isolated police stations and the mines that dot the slopes of the highlands. As the movement gathered strength, its needs increased correspondingly.¹³ By the mid-1980s, it had found a new source of local support and funding in the coca producers and drug trafficking of the Upper Huallaga Valley in north-central Peru. Although it had to compete there at first with its smaller and less radical guerrilla rival, the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement—MRTA),¹⁴ Shining Path soon achieved a dominant position in the valley. By the late 1980s it is estimated that the guerrillas were extracting at least US\$10 million a year from the “taxes” paid by Colombian traffickers operating there.¹⁵

Shining Path set up a finance committee to distribute the funds to the organization’s central and regional committees to buy weapons, bribe local officials, and pay cadre. The guerrillas also enlisted the support of local coca growers by forcing buyers to pay higher prices for their production. Thus, having decided to go it alone, Shining Path was able to garner substantial internal resources to fund its operations and maintain its autonomy.¹⁶

How Peru’s Government Aided Shining Path’s Growth

Assisting the PCP-SL in its quest were the efforts by the RMG between 1969 and 1975 to effect major change in economic and political organization, particularly a comprehensive agrarian reform. The private land redistribution model applied, however, was not well suited to highland community-based agriculture, particularly in Ayacucho, where only a few productive private estates operated. Its implementation further degraded the already precarious position of indigenous peasants, opening up opportunities the radical Maoists were able to exploit.¹⁷

Contributing to Shining Path’s ability to expand its operations in the 1980s was a second consideration—the reluctance of the new democratic government to recognize the presence of an insurgency. President Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1980–1985), ousted by a coup during his previous term of office (1963–1968), was so fearful of renewed military influence in his second administration that he downplayed the problem for over two years. Although he did order specialized police forces, the *sinchis*, into Ayacucho in 1981, their extraordinarily bad comportment forced him to withdraw them within a few months. In addition, throughout his second term he resisted calls to provide complementary economic support, resulting in a government response that focused almost exclusively on military operations.¹⁸

The *sinchis*' actions highlighted a significant third factor, the long history of misunderstanding and exploitation in Peru between the white and mestizo center, based in Lima, and the largely indigenous highland periphery.¹⁹ This contributed to a racist mind-set among police and military that often produced, once they intervened, inappropriate responses amounting to state terrorism. Such actions not only served to drive indigenous peasants into the arms of Shining Path, but also provided insurgents with further justification for their armed struggle.²⁰

With the historic 1985 electoral victory of Peru's longest standing and best institutionalized party, the reformist Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance—APRA), the initial policies of President Alan García Pérez (1985–1990) suggested a shift in counterinsurgency strategy that included economic as well as military initiatives in the highlands. However, his misguided macroeconomic policies produced hyperinflation and a virtual economic implosion over the last half of his administration, not only forcing the abandonment of the highland strategy but also creating a serious erosion in both civil government and military institutional capacity.²¹

One result was a sharp decline in military and police morale, as defense budgets were cut by more than 50 percent in the late 1980s and inflation reduced salaries to less than 10 percent of mid-1980s levels.²² Exacerbating the problem was the growing number of police and armed forces casualties at the hands of Shining Path—a total of 1,196 deaths over the first 10 years of the conflict.²³ These developments provoked mass resignations and contributed to a decline in the armed forces' readiness status from 75 percent in 1985 to 30 percent by 1990.²⁴

Such corrosive dynamics played out in the field in a loss of discipline, increased corruption, and, all too often, virtually complete operational ineffectiveness. Although the García government undertook an organizational overhaul of the armed forces, police, and eight separate intelligence agencies by consolidating and renaming them, the lack of resources, both human and material, ensured that no effective change would be immediately forthcoming.

In summary, the insurgents were able to initiate and expand their people's war through long preparation, charismatic leadership, a remote base, a radicalized ideology, and voluntarism. They were aided in their efforts by government inaction, a belated response, massive human rights violations, and economic crisis. This combination produced a set of conditions favorable for revolution that had not existed at the outset of the people's war, and enabled Shining Path to make major advances toward its goal of revolutionary victory.

Rebel Failure on the Brink of Success

This set of considerations raises a second fundamental question. If Shining Path was poised for victory by the early 1990s, why did its revolution not succeed? Within 5 years, the revolutionaries were a spent force, dead, in jail, or rehabilitated, the remnants scattered and no longer a threat to the state. Part of the explanation has to do with ways in which Shining Path contributed to its own collapse and part with major shifts in official strategies and policies.

Rebel Mistakes

One of Shining Path's problems came to be overconfidence bordering on hubris. Although the organization's leadership envisioned a long-term struggle at the outset of its peoples' war, their successes against a government almost pathologically unwilling to mount effective responses gave rise to the belief that they were on the brink of victory. Such overconfidence led the leadership to exercise less caution in their security and in tracking the rural support structures that had long provided their core cadre.²⁵

Another could be characterized as ideological myopia. While Shining Path's radical and uncompromising Maoist ideology served for years as a potent unifying force for militants, over time it also served to alienate the revolution's presumed beneficiaries, the indigenous peasantry. Initially attracted by the promise of a change in status, peasants within Shining Path's orbit had imposed on them an organizational structure completely at odds with their heritage and needs, and were subjected to terrorism and intimidation as cadre tried to maintain their "support."²⁶

A third was the hydrocephalic nature of Shining Path's organization. Although the guerrillas developed a set of national, regional, and local organizations and central and regional party committees, all power flowed from a single individual, President Gonzalo (Guzmán's nom de guerre). He was the group's founder, ideologist, strategist, and internal contradiction synthesizer, and explicitly fostered a "cult of personality" within the membership. As a result, Shining Path was particularly vulnerable as a guerrilla organization should he be removed.²⁷

Fourth was Guzmán's decision to initiate more systematic urban terrorism in the late 1980s, particularly in Lima. Operations in the capital city sowed havoc and panic, but also brought the peoples' war to the doorsteps of the political elites for the first time. It helped them realize that the very survival of the nation was at stake, and strengthened the resolve of central

government to find solutions. These operations also made the guerrillas more vulnerable due to intelligence services' greater familiarity with urban than highland surroundings.²⁸

In short, just as much of the explanation for the ability of Shining Path to advance its revolutionary project can be attributed to government errors over the decade of the 1980s, the guerrillas' own mistakes contributed to their failure in the early 1990s.

Government Successes

Whatever Shining Path's errors, it is unlikely that the threat would have been overcome without major adjustments in the government's approach to counterinsurgency. These occurred over a period of several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as Shining Path was gaining the upper hand in the conflict in a rapidly deteriorating socioeconomic context. The cumulative effect of these changes was to turn the tide decisively in the government's favor.

A New Approach to Counterinsurgency

One significant change was the military's top-to-bottom review of its counterinsurgency strategy in 1988–1989. It compiled a "Countersubversive Manual" that systematically analyzed the antiguerrilla campaign to that point and developed a new strategy to include political, economic, and psychosocial aspects of counterinsurgency.²⁹ This manual became the guide for the progressive introduction of a new approach by the Peruvian armed forces to deal with Shining Path.

One innovation following from this review, beginning in 1990, was a military "hearts and minds" civic action campaign in a number of the urban neighborhoods and communities most susceptible to Shining Path influence. The initiatives were modest, from free haircuts to health clinics, but quite quickly turned local indifference, fear, or hostility to support. With carefully coordinated publicity for these initiatives, the media began to convey a more positive image of the military that helped to change public perceptions as well.³⁰

A second adjustment was to attach a soldier or two native to the area to the unit conducting operations in that locality. The individuals involved knew the community, spoke the local language or dialect, and often could help the military unit communicate with locals and gather better information on Shining Path sympathizers and operations. The military's reluctance to use such personnel stemmed from a deeply held view in a highly

centralized political system that these individuals would be likely to have a greater allegiance to their friends and relatives in the community than to the organization for which they worked. With the looming specter of failure and possible government collapse, however, this change produced positive results—better communication with the locals and the collection of previously unavailable intelligence.³¹

In a third significant adjustment, the military began to be much more sensitive to the negative effects of indiscriminate attacks on local populations, and began training its operational units to carry out missions with fewer human rights violations. As their counterinsurgency activities became more precisely targeted and less repressive, they began to gain the support of local populations. This shift in approach contrasted sharply with Shining Path's increasingly violent operations as it tried to retain local control through force and intimidation.³²

A fourth shift in counterinsurgency strategy involved 1991 congressional legislation sponsored by the Fujimori government to support training and arming peasant organizations (called *rondas campesinas* locally, or civil defense committees—CDCs—by the army) as a first line of defense against rebel attacks. Over many decades, when local highland communities found themselves threatened by cattle rustlers or attempts by neighboring communities to forcibly take some of their land, they would organize community members into *rondas* to overcome such threats to their livelihood or well-being.³³

Shining Path's activities in the 1980s represented to many communities one more threat that had to be resisted. Often, however, their primitive weapons of stones, slingshots, and sharpened sticks were no match for Shining Path's superior arms. Even so, for years Peru's military resisted any initiative to support the *rondas*, both out of fear that training and arms could be turned against the government and from a lack of confidence, rooted in long-standing racist views, in the ability of indigenous populations to use the assistance properly.³⁴

After the army began its program of limited military training and even more limited arming of the *rondas*, by 1993 their numbers grew to more than 4,200 across the highlands, with almost 236,000 members.³⁵ They often proved able to fend off Shining Path attacks long enough to give army units time to arrive on the scene and rout the rebels. This was a crucial shift in the government's counterinsurgency strategy because it provided local populations most affected by the guerrillas and with the greatest stake in overcoming threats with the capacity to resist them.³⁶

A fifth significant change in the Peruvian government's counterinsurgency approach was the late 1989 decision by APRA administration

interior minister, Augustín Mantilla, to create a small, autonomous police intelligence unit, the Grupo Especial de Inteligencia (Special Intelligence Group—GEIN) with the sole mission of tracking the Shining Path leadership. After a shaky beginning, with only five members and outdated equipment, the unit received infusions of new resources and personnel.³⁷ Although unsuccessful in its early efforts due to intense political pressure to show results in the waning weeks of the discredited García government, incoming President Fujimori chose to leave the GEIN in place.

Given virtually complete autonomy, the intelligence group slowly progressed in its capacity to identify and follow the guerrilla leadership. Over the course of 1991, the GEIN operatives were able to round up a number of second-level Shining Path leaders, even as the organization was carrying out ever more brazen and violent terrorist acts. The breakthrough occurred on September 12, 1992, when some 35 GEIN personnel burst into a Lima safe house and captured without violence a startled and security escort-less Guzmán, along with several other PCP-SL Central Committee members and key files.³⁸

With this dramatic success, soon followed by the roundup of several hundred other militants and cadre, the government delivered a mortal psychological and tactical blow to the Shining Path organization. The Fujimori government milked the moment to its full extent by publicly displaying Guzmán to the media in a cage especially constructed for the occasion, and then quickly tried him in a military court under new procedures that kept the identities of the judges hidden. Predictably, the court sentenced him to life imprisonment.³⁹ In addition, President Fujimori himself handed over to the GEIN members the million-dollar reward offered for Guzmán.

Although violent incidents declined only slightly over the six months following Guzmán's capture and then increased over seven months in 1993, these proved to be the last gasps of a dying movement.⁴⁰ By the end of 1994, Shining Path, while still a nuisance in some parts of the country, had ceased to pose a threat to the Peruvian state. Clearly, the new counter-insurgency strategy played a major role in such a dramatic turn of events.

Other Significant Policy Adjustments

The Fujimori government also undertook four other important initiatives in its efforts to gain the upper hand over Shining Path. One was the 1992 establishment of a military and civilian court procedure of “faceless” judges to ensure rapid trials of insurgents and protection from reprisals. A major problem successive Peruvian governments experienced to this point

had been the long delay in bringing prisoners accused of subversion to court, with time in jail awaiting trial averaging over seven years. Another was the systematic intimidation and even assassination of judges assigned to the trials, which had a chilling effect on their willingness to convict as well as a tendency to find legal excuses to justify release from prison of already convicted terrorists.⁴¹

This new trial procedure was controversial from the outset because of the courts' short-circuiting of due process (Peruvian judicial authorities subsequently determined that several hundred convictions had been secured without legal justification).⁴² However, its positive effects were to quickly overcome both the backlog of pending cases and to process new ones, which helped restore public confidence in government efficacy and its own sense of security.

A second important initiative of the Peruvian government was the implementation of a "repentance law" in early 1993, in effect until late 1994. This law was designed to allow Shining Path cadre and sympathizers to turn themselves in with weapons and/or information in exchange for their progressive reintegration into society. Over 5,000 individuals availed themselves of this opportunity, although most were lower-level supporters and sympathizers rather than regional or national leaders. Even so, the government gained additional intelligence in the process, and the law also offered a way out for those who had chosen to support Shining Path. In the context of the capture of Guzmán, the timing of the repentance law was ideal, as it came when the incentive for sympathizers and militants to turn themselves in had increased markedly.⁴³

A third government initiative, simultaneously a component of the new approach to counterinsurgency and a response to the economic crisis that had gutted government bureaucracy and left millions of Peruvians in desperate poverty, was to create a new set of small official microdevelopment organizations for districts where extreme poverty was the most severe, almost all rural. Many of these were also centers of Shining Path activity.⁴⁴

The new agencies were small (about 300 employees each, nationwide), and the employees were highly trained specialists, often engineers, recruited on merit criteria, paid high salaries, and given significant regional autonomy. The agencies were also focused on small development programs that would have significant and rapid local impact, and included irrigation, potable water, reforestation, soil conservation, electrification, school building, and access roads.⁴⁵

Most projects were relatively inexpensive, costing \$2,000 or less, with labor provided by the communities themselves and technical oversight by the agencies. In many, the requirement to begin a project was for the

community to decide what it most needed and to elect a small committee to oversee the project. Between 1993 and 1998, these agencies expended about a billion dollars on these projects and succeeded in reducing extreme poverty by one-half (from 31 percent to 15 percent). The agencies significantly improved citizen well-being in many districts affected by political violence and demonstrated that government cared about them enough to extend its reach once again to even the most isolated parts of Peru. They also fostered new local organizations that helped to recreate a measure of institutional capacity within civil society at the grassroots.⁴⁶

Finally, a government response not directly related to the counterinsurgency but which played a significant role in addressing the larger context of deepening economic crisis that contributed to Shining Path expansion was the effort to restore economic stability and growth. When President Fujimori took office in July 1990, he faced hyperinflation, loss of international credit, severe economic decline, and high unemployment. Without immediate and drastic measures to turn the national economy around, it is doubtful that counterinsurgency initiatives alone could have stemmed the growing threat posed by Shining Path.⁴⁷ Almost immediately the new government instituted a drastic economic shock program to break the inflationary cycle, soon restored payments on the foreign debt, created a new tax collection agency, revamped the bloated government bureaucracy, and introduced major neoliberal economic reforms.

The Fujimori government's draconian measures reversed the downward economic spiral within a year; broke hyperinflation and regained Peru's good standing in the international economic system within two years; and restored economic growth, foreign investment, and effective governance by the end of its third year in office. In spite of the multiple problems the country was facing and the strong medicine the administration was administering to try to overcome them, the president's public approval ratings remained high. The general popular perception was that Peru now had a head of state willing to take action rather than play politics and thinking about the public interest rather than personal gain.⁴⁸

However dramatic the turnaround during these first years of the Fujimori administration, the peoples' war exacted a high cost for the country and its citizens. Over the 15-year trajectory of Shining Path's revolutionary terrorism and the government's efforts to combat it, close to a million Peruvians, mostly humble highland peasants, were displaced from their homes and became internal refugees. Roughly an equal number emigrated out of fear for their safety and despair of ever finding secure opportunities in their homeland. The estimates of the total damage caused by Shining Path operations between 1980 and 1995 were over US\$15 billion to

infrastructure and \$10 billion in lost production, or about half of Peru's 1990 GDP. The previous official estimates of 35,000 deaths and disappearances turned out to be significantly underestimated. A careful study by Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, mostly in rural highland areas, concluded that the correct total was closer to 70,000.⁴⁹

Sadly, democracy was also a casualty, with President Fujimori's self-coup (*autogolpe*) in 1992. While pressured to restore democratic forms a year later by the Organization of American States, following his 1995 reelection Fujimori and his advisors progressively constrained democratic procedures with a set of provisions of dubious legality. Though forced from office in a spectacular set of developments in 2000, shortly after his fraudulent reelection, the path to democratic reconstruction has been difficult but increasingly successful over time.⁵⁰

Although a transition government led by Valentín Paniagua (2000–2001) righted the democratic ship, his elected successor, President Alejandro Toledo (2001–2006), proved unable to sustain the political momentum even with significant economic growth, due to vacillation and improvisation. His successor, Alan García once again (2006–2011), did a total about-face from his disastrous first administration by maintaining and deepening the market economy. However, his government often did not handle well growing popular unrest and protest in Peru's highland and jungle hinterlands. In this context, Shining Path began to show new signs of life, with recruitment efforts in universities and peasant communities, incidents of political violence, renewed activity in coca-growing areas, and utilization of a more transparent and human rights-respecting government to renew contacts from prisons and bring back members completing their jail terms.

Military operations to quell the most radical faction of Shining Path, based in the Apurímac valley of Ayacucho and Cuzco, repeated some of the same mistakes as its predecessor in the 1980s. With the 2011 electoral victory of García's successor, retired military officer Ollanta Humala, however, both police and military operations underwent significant adjustments. As a result, the military faction of Shining Path, which continued to support Guzmán in the coca-growing Upper Huallaga valley, was virtually eliminated by police operations, and military forces were able to reduce significantly the capacity of the Apurímac-based guerrillas as well. Only the political wing of Shining Path, the Movimiento para la Amnistía y Derechos Humanos Fundamentales (Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Human Rights, or MOVADef) remains as a significant opposition force. However, it espouses protest rather than violence and has been unsuccessful in its efforts to register as a political party.

On balance, then, Shining Path no longer represents a threat to the Peruvian state or to most of the population. With the increasingly routinized and consolidated democratic process in Peru, along with sustained economic growth, it is unlikely that Shining Path will be in any position to exploit the Peruvian political process for the foreseeable future.

Conclusions: Lessons Learned from the Peruvian Experience

Peru eventually overcame the threat posed by the radical Maoist Shining Path, but at great human and institutional cost. What does this major example of a government's struggle against a determined guerrilla adversary reveal about the best ways to deal with the challenge and about what should be avoided?

1. *Respond promptly.* Looking back, had the government taken the threat seriously as soon as Shining Path began to carry out armed operations after publicly declaring its peoples' war, it would very likely have nipped the insurgency in the bud.⁵¹ However, the government's initial response was to withdraw from more isolated police posts as soon as they were attacked or threatened. The result was to open up additional space for Shining Path to build popular support groups in the indigenous communities and to strengthen its military capacity.
2. *Conduct counterinsurgent operations that balance military force with economic incentives and that treat local noncombatants with respect.* When the government finally did begin to take the guerrillas seriously, it responded almost exclusively with military force, often directed indiscriminately and in a racist manner against the local indigenous population. Field commanders who requested an economic development component to support their military activities were ignored or dismissed. By such operations, the military helped to create the very conditions conducive to the expansion of local support for Shining Path that had not existed at the outset of the conflict. Once the government, with disaster looming, undertook a comprehensive overhaul of its counterinsurgency strategy and the military began to conduct operations that were more sensitive to the needs of the local population, it was able to undercut Shining Path's presence and regain the advantage in the countryside.
3. *Maintain responsible macroeconomic policies.* The APRA government that came to power in 1985, after a promising start, pursued an economic policy that increased poverty dramatically and virtually bankrupted the country. By the end of the decade, Peru faced its most serious economic crisis in over 100 years, a situation that provoked a legitimacy crisis for the government and enabled Shining Path to advance its revolutionary project much more rapidly than its leaders had originally anticipated. Once APRA's successor, the Fujimori regime, adopted major economic restructuring, ended hyperinflation,

and began to generate renewed economic growth, it was able to reestablish the Peruvian government's legitimacy with the wider public and reduce the sense of inevitability of an imminent Shining Path victory.

4. *Develop a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy that includes tracking the leadership.* Although long delayed and pursued only in a context of great duress, Peruvian governments eventually put together a multifaceted approach to cope with the growing guerrilla threat. This new strategy included the creation of a specialized police intelligence unit to identify and find the insurgent leadership, the implementation of multiple approaches designed to garner local support, and the decision to train and arm the *rondas*. While each component of the new strategy played an important role in restoring authorities' ability to deal more effectively with Shining Path, the work of the specialized police intelligence unit in tracking down and capturing the organization's leader proved to be the decisive blow. Once these measures enabled the government to regain the initiative, the repentance law offering Shining Path sympathizers rehabilitation and reinsertion into society became a critical instrument of pacification.

Along with such specific and significant adjustments in the government's approach to counterinsurgency, the Fujimori administration also established a set of new official agencies to carry out a range of small development programs in the poorest districts of Peru, often where Shining Path had a significant presence. These provided significant benefits in a short period of time for 2 to 4 million of the country's most needy citizens, while simultaneously reestablishing the government's presence and legitimacy in the periphery.

5. *Take advantage of carefully targeted external counterinsurgency support.* External actors, particularly the U.S. government, became sufficiently concerned about Shining Path's advances against the beleaguered Peruvian democracy to provide significant military and intelligence support in 1991 and 1992. With Fujimori's April 1992 *autogolpe*, however, the United States immediately suspended military assistance and training. Even so, the U.S. government did not end specialized intelligence aid. It is believed that such support was critical in locating the safe house occupied by Guzmán, support that enabled the Peruvian police intelligence unit to conduct its successful raid and capture Shining Path's leader.⁵² Peruvian authorities' belief that the snaring of the head of the insurgent organization would be a devastating psychological and organizational blow turned out to be correct. In an organization where a single individual held most of the power, removing that person would likely be the group's death knell.
6. *Understand the enemy and exploit its weaknesses.* Unlike the government, the insurgents did not learn or adapt. From the outset, Shining Path pursued the single objective of overthrowing the regime through the peoples' war. Negotiation was never an option. Convinced of the ideological correctness of its approach, which included the complete reorganization of civil society along

Maoist lines, the Shining Path leaders tried to impose a model in its areas of operation that in no way reflected the traditions, patterns, and needs of those they said were to be the beneficiaries of their revolution. Their ideological fervor and their successes against the government for a number of years blinded them to the possibility that they could be defeated. While they often learned from failures in field operations and adjusted their military strategy accordingly, they did not do so in their relations with the civilian populations under their influence. But their greatest failure was to underestimate the capacity of government to learn from its own mistakes and to develop a new set of counterinsurgency initiatives that exploited Shining Path's weaknesses.

7. *Retain democracy for the internal and external legitimacy it conveys.* Beyond the physical and human destruction wrought by the insurgency and the government's response, another casualty was Peru's democracy. Although President Fujimori defended his *autogolpe* as necessary to prevail against Shining Path, most observers conclude that success occurred in spite of the suspension of the constitution, legislature, and the judiciary, not because of it. The military, frustrated by the failures of the elected governments of the 1980s to stem the insurgency or to govern effectively amid the chaos of the last months of the García government, put together a plan for gaining greater control over the process, the so-called Libro Verde, or Green Book. This plan envisioned stronger executive control, a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy, and the implementation of free market principles to restore the economy.⁵³

With Fujimori's 1990 election, the military saw an opportunity to accomplish the Libro Verde objectives through civilian rule. Since Fujimori did not have a strong party apparatus to support him, the military became his major pillar of institutional support and backed his 1992 suspension of constitutional government. However, through patronage and careful cultivation of some top military officials, Fujimori and his close advisors, particularly Vlademiro Montesinos, not the military, became the controlling force in government policy.

While it is not clear that Fujimori planned a coup from the outset of his administration, he certainly had no patience for the give and take of democratic politics with the opposition majority in congress. On balance, the 1992 democratic breakdown can be attributed not only to the president's personal proclivities, but also to a number of other factors. These include the corrosive forces of the peoples' war and counterinsurgency over more than a decade and to multiple errors of elected civilian authority in other areas of governance, most particularly economic mismanagement.

As subsequent events were to demonstrate, nevertheless, even after the threat of Shining Path had passed, the Fujimori government continued to manipulate the system to shut off dissent and to ensure that it would continue to run the country. So instead of receiving acclaim for the success of

the counterinsurgency effort and for the significant improvement in the economic and personal security of much of the citizenry, the former president was pilloried for the abuses of power that he and his closest advisors committed while in office.

Democracy has been reestablished in Peru and has been slowly strengthened over time in a context of regular elections and continued economic growth. While challenges still remain, especially in such areas as the economic, social, and ethnic disparities between the coast and highlands, the generalized terrorism of Shining Path is no longer one of them. Nevertheless, continuing disparities within the country, protests over the impact of mining investments on local environments, weak and often corrupt political elites, and low popular approval levels of political leaders provide a context within which another insurgency, perhaps even one led by a reorganized variant of Shining Path, could again emerge.

Notes

1. This chapter draws in part from the author's "Revolution in the Name of Mao: Revolution and Response in Peru," in *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past*, ed. Robert Art and Louise Richardson (Washington, DC: United Institute of Peace Press, 2007), a project supported by the United States Institute of Peace.

2. David Scott Palmer, "Peru's Persistent Problems," *Current History* 89, no. 543 (January 1990): 6–7. The casualty figures cited here have been revised sharply upward by Peru's Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) in its 2003 report, noted below in footnote 49.

3. Carol Graham, *Peru's APRA: Parties, Politics, and the Elusive Quest for Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 37–39.

4. Philip Mauceri, *State under Siege: Development and Policy Making in Peru* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996), 21–25.

5. Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen, *Sendero: La historia de la guerra milenaria en el Perú* (Lima: Editorial Apoyo, 1990).

6. David Scott Palmer, "Rebellion in Rural Peru: The Origins and Evolution of Sendero Luminoso," *Comparative Politics* 18, no. 2 (January 1986): 128–29.

7. Carlos Iván Degregori, *Ayacucho 1969–1979: El surgimiento de Sendero Luminoso* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1990).

8. Fernando Romero Pintado, "New Design for an Old University: San Cristóbal de Huamanga," *Américas* (December 1961).

9. Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen, "Shining Path's Stalin and Trotsky," in *Shining Path of Peru*, 2nd ed., ed. David Scott Palmer (New York: St. Martin's, 1994), 167–77.

10. Degregori, *Ayacucho 1969–1979*, 41–47.

11. Ellenbogen, *Sendero*.

12. Peter Flindell Klarén, *Peru: Society and Nationhood in the Andes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 369–70.

13. Simon Strong, *Sendero Luminoso: El movimiento subversivo más letal del mundo* (Lima: Peru Reporting, 1992), 106.

14. For a comprehensive overview of the MRTA, see Gordon H. McCormick, *Sharp Dressed Men: Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993). It should be noted, however, that the MRTA was responsible for only a small proportion of incidents of political violence (less than 3 percent), and even fewer of the deaths attributed to guerrilla activity in Peru through the early 1990s (less than 1 percent).

15. José E. Gonzales, "Guerrillas and Coca in the Upper Huallaga Valley," in *Shining Path of Peru*, ed. David Scott Palmer (New York: St. Martin's, 1994), 123–44.

16. Gabriela Tarazona Sevillano, *Sendero Luminoso and the Threat of Narcoterrorism*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington Papers 144 (New York: Praeger, 1990).

17. David Scott Palmer, *Revolution from Above: Military Government and Popular Participation in Peru, 1968–1972* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Latin American Studies Program, 1973), 230–37.

18. Gen. Roberto C. Noel Moral, *Ayacucho: Testimonio de un soldado* (Lima: Publinor, 1989).

19. Julio Cotler, "La mecánica de la dominación interna y del cambio social en el Perú," in *Perú Problema* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 145–88.

20. Carlos Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso: Dos estrategias y un final* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1997), 27–43.

21. Philip Mauceri, "Military Politics and Counter-Insurgency in Peru," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 33, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 100.

22. David Scott Palmer, "National Security," in *Peru: A Country Study*, Area Handbook Series, 4th ed., ed. Rex A. Hudson (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993), 289, 292.

23. David Scott Palmer, "The Revolutionary Terrorism of Peru's Shining Path," in *Terrorism in Context*, ed. Martha Crenshaw (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), Table 7.1, 271.

24. Palmer, "National Security," 292.

25. Carlos Iván Degregori, "After the Fall of Abimael Guzmán: The Limits of Sendero Luminoso," in *The Peruvian Labyrinth: Polity, Society, Economy*, ed. Maxwell A. Cameron and Philip Mauceri (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 179–91.

26. Carlos Iván Degregori, "Harvesting Storms: Peasant Rondas and the Defeat of Sendero Luminoso in Ayacucho," in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980–1995*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 131–40; Billy Jean Isbell, "Shining Path and Peasant Responses in Rural Ayacucho," in *Shining Path of Peru*, ed. Palmer, pp. 77–100; Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 103–4.

27. See the revealing interview given by Guzmán to Luis Borje Arce and Janet Talavera Sánchez in *El Diario*, a sympathetic Lima weekly, which they titled, "La entrevista del siglo: El Presidente Gonzalo rompe el silencio," July 24, 1988: 2–48. Also, the organizational structure and its vulnerabilities, in Benedicto Jiménez Bacca, *Inicio, desarrollo, y ocaso del terrorismo en el Perú* (Lima: SANKI, 2000), Tomo 1.

28. Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 133–52.

29. *Ibid.*, 43–55.

30. Orin Starn, "Sendero, soldados y ronderos en el Mantaro," *Quehacer* 74 (noviembre–diciembre 1991): 64–65; Lewis Taylor, "La estrategia contrainsurgente: El PCP-SL y la guerra civil en el Perú, 1980–1996," *Debate Agrario* 26 (julio 1997): 105–6.

31. David Scott Palmer, Interviews with military personnel in Ayacucho, July–August 1998.

32. Starn, "Sendero, soldados, y ronderos," 64; Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 47–48.

33. Orin Starn, ed., *Hablan los ronderos: La búsqueda por la paz en los Andes*, Documento de Trabajo No. 45 (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1993), 11–28.

34. José Coronel, "Violencia política y respuestas campesinas en Huanta," in *Las rondas campesinas y la derrota de Sendero Luminoso*, ed. Carlos Iván Degregori et al. (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1996), 48–56.

35. Ponciano del Pino, "Tiempos de guerra y de dioses: Ronderos, evangélicos y senderistas en el valle del río Apurímac," in *Las Rondas campesinas y la Derrota de Sendero Luminoso*, ed. Carlos Iván Degregori et al. (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1996), 181.

36. Orin Starn, "Villagers at Arms: War and Counterrevolution in the Central-South Andes," in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980–1995*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 232.

37. GEIN personnel increased to about 35 by 1990, and 50 a year later. Gustavo Gorriti, "El día que cayó Sendero Luminoso," *Selecciones de Reader's Digest* (diciembre 1996): 121, 123, 127.

38. Gorriti, "El día que cayó Sendero Luminoso," 136–42; Benedicto Jiménez Bacca, *Inicio, desarrollo y ocaso del Terrorismo en el Perú*, Tomo II, 740–56.

39. Sally Bowen, *The Fujimori File: Peru and Its President, 1990–2000* (Lima: Peru Monitor, 2000), 137–43.

40. Violent incidents declined by less than 10 percent in late 1992 and early 1993 and then increased by over 15 percent during the following seven months. Palmer, "The Revolutionary Terrorism of Peru's Shining Path," 284, 304.

41. Comisión de Juristas Internacionales, *Informe sobre la administración de justicia en el Perú*, 30 de noviembre de 1993, typescript, *passim*.

42. In 1999, the Inter-American Human Rights Court (IAHRC), of which Peru was a signatory, declared that the faceless judge procedure was an unconstitutional violation of due process. Though rejected by the Fujimori government, its

successor accepted the IAHRC decision and set up new trials for those convicted under the unconstitutional arrangement.

43. Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 80–81; Bowen, *The Fujimori File*, 155–57; Del Pino, “Family, Culture, and ‘Revolution’,” 171, 177.

44. David Scott Palmer, “Soluciones ciudadanas y crisis política: El caso de Ayacucho,” in *El juego político: Fujimori, la oposición y las reglas*, ed. Fernando Tuesta Soldevilla (Lima: Fundación Friedrich Ebert, 1999), 285–90.

45. David Scott Palmer, “FONCODES y su impacto en la pacificación en el Perú: Observaciones generales y el caso de Ayacucho,” in Fondo Nacional de Compensación y Desarrollo Nacional (FONCODES), *Concertando para el desarrollo: Lecciones aprendidas del FONCODES en sus estrategias de intervención* (Lima: Gráfica Medelius, 2001), 147–77.

46. David Scott Palmer, “Citizen Responses to Conflict and Political Crisis in Peru: Informal Politics in Ayacucho,” in *What Justice? Whose Justice? Fighting for Fairness in Latin America*, ed. Susan Eva Eckstein and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 233–54.

47. Javier Iguíñiz, “La estrategia económica del gobierno de Fujimori: Una visión global,” in *El Perú de Fujimori*, ed. John Crabtree and Jim Thomas (Lima: Universidad del Pacífico y el Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2000), 15–43.

48. John Crabtree, “Neopopulismo y el fenómeno Fujimori,” in *El Perú de Fujimori*, ed. John Crabtree and Jim Thomas (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2000), 45–71.

49. Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación Perú, *Informe Final: Tomo I: Primera parte: El proceso, los hechos, las víctimas* (Lima: Navarrete, 2003), 169.

50. Among others, Carmen Rosa Balbi and David Scott Palmer, “‘Reinventing’ Democracy in Peru,” *Current History* 100, no. 643 (February 2001): 65–72.

51. There are precedents. In 1959, the military responded quickly to a Trotskyite-organized rebellion in the La Convención valley of Cuzco, and again in 1965 to a Castro-inspired attempt to establish *focos* in three isolated locations in the central Andean highlands. For La Convención, Wesley W. Craig, Jr., “Peru: The Peasant Movement of La Convención,” in *Latin American Peasant Movements*, ed. Henry A. Landsberger (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 274–96; for the Andean highlands, Luis de la Puente Uceda, “The Peruvian Revolution: Concepts and Perspectives,” *Monthly Review* 17 (November 1965): 12–28. The failure of the Peruvian government to respond quickly to this new rural insurgency is puzzling, given its earlier successes. The explanation rests in part on President Belaúnde’s aversion to deploy the military again, as he had in 1965, because he feared another coup as in 1968, and in part on the military’s own reluctance, having been weakened as an institution by 12 years in power.

52. For this and other information on the U.S. role, Cynthia McClintock and Fabian Vallas, *The United States and Peru: Cooperation at a Cost* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 69–73. Also Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador’s FMLN and Peru’s Shining Path* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 145, 238, and *passim*. While not the focus of this

study, the United States also contributed to the Peruvian military's preparations to end the dramatic December 1995 takeover of the Japanese ambassador's residence by the MRTA. When extensive and drawn-out negotiations faltered, in mid-April 1996 Peru's counterterrorism unit mounted a spectacular and successful operation. It freed 42 hostages, killed all 14 MRTA guerrillas, and demonstrated the effectiveness of the counterterrorism capacity originally developed to deal with the Shining Path threat.

53. Enrique Obando, "Fujimori y las Fuerzas Armadas," in *El Perú de Fujimori*, ed. John Crabtree and Jim Thomas (Lima: Universidad del Pacífico y el Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2000), 361–62.

Sixty Years of Counterinsurgency in Colombia

From “La Violencia” to the “Sword of Honor” Plan¹

Román D. Ortiz and Janneth Vargas

COLOMBIA'S FORCE STRUCTURE AND COUNTERINSURGENCY DOCTRINE have largely been shaped by the military's tactical and operational interaction with a host of insurgent groups that have come into existence and, to an appreciable degree, thrived over the past six decades. With this in mind, the present chapter analyzes the evolution of Colombian counterinsurgency over the past 60 years. First, we provide a quick review of the military response to the outburst of sectarian violence that shook the country during the 1950s, followed by a section that highlights the long-term consequences of a peculiar civil-military relations doctrine instituted toward the 1960s. A third section examines the rise of modern insurgent movements across the country during the 1970s and 1980s. This is followed by a look into the changes in the civil-military relations in the early 1990s and its impact on the counterinsurgency strategy. Fifth, the military's broad reforms to confront the security crisis in the late 1990s are analyzed. Subsequently, the Democratic Security Policy implemented by the Uribe administration is described. Finally, the innovations brought by the “Sword of Honor” Plan (Plan Espada de Honor) developed under the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos are analyzed in some detail.

Confronting *La Violencia*: The Roots of Counterinsurgency in Colombia

When the period of mass political violence known as *La Violencia* (the Violence) erupted in 1948, Colombia's modern military was barely three decades old and held both a number of advantages as well as a number of disadvantages for accomplishing the task at hand. In its favor, the military could count on some previous experience regarding the conduct of internal security operations. Likewise, the organization's relative youth and incomplete establishment as a conventional force made it quite malleable to change in the face of need. However, these factors also stood as organizational limitations, since the Army's scarce time and operational experience as a unified structure, as well as its new and relatively untested officer corps, hindered its capability to design long-term strategies and conduct large-scale operations.

The period of intense sectarian violence known as *La Violencia* began with a wave of popular uprisings resulting from the assassination of liberal party leader and presidential candidate Jorge Eliecer Gaitán on May 9, 1948. Upon lynching his assassin, a mob set out to pillage and destroy downtown Bogotá, setting off regional uprisings and street violence throughout wide areas of the country. Faced with a general breakdown of public order, the conservative government launched a series of operations to restore order. These efforts began by reasserting military control of Bogotá, where the meager 2,000-strong police force had disintegrated and joined the rioting, and continued outwards, into towns and villages throughout the country.² Though successful in urban centers, the military operations drove a number of radical liberal militants to the countryside, where they were able to organize into guerrilla units based mainly out of the Llanos Orientales (the western plains), and the Tolima and Sumapaz regions. Allowing them to regroup and establish base camps in these areas, relatively undisturbed by government forces, would later prove to be a major strategic mistake.³

While over the course of the following years, the liberal guerrillas launched a harassment campaign against official forces from their safe havens in the Llanos and Tolima camps, they never managed to organize their efforts around a strategic plan to overthrow the government. The inability of both liberal and conservative politicians to bring an end to the political violence set the stage for a bloodless coup by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla in 1953.⁴ Upon seizing power, Rojas launched a pacification campaign markedly more sophisticated than the efforts of his predecessors, particularly in two aspects. First, his decision to appoint the Army as the primary force charged with the campaign was fairly well received,

largely because the military's apolitical character since the early 20th century constituted a guarantee of neutrality that both liberal and conservative militias—or even the police—lacked. Second, Colombia's participation in the Korean War, through the deployment of an infantry battalion embedded within U.S. forces, allowed the military to capitalize on the freshly acquired expertise of its officers in operational intelligence, general staff organization, and infantry maneuvers. The latter circumstance was amplified by the fact the U.S. government integrated the Colombian pacification effort into the larger campaign to contain the spread of communism in Latin America in the context of the early Cold War, thus opening the door to American military assistance.⁵ In this context, Rojas seized the opportunity warranted by this increase in available resources and set forth an effort that, for the first time in Colombia, combined the political and military elements of a modern counterinsurgency campaign: an amnesty offering and a simultaneous dose of military pressure aimed at promoting the demobilization or, if necessary, destruction of the guerrillas.

In the conduct of the campaign, Rojas introduced a number of relevant tactical innovations, among which is the Army's still-used "cordon and search" concept of operation. Likewise, the military's newly available air and ground equipment, the fruit of U.S. cooperation, was rapidly deployed and integrated into the Army's and the Air Force's operational repertoire. Innovations were also made with respect to combat unit structure, including the introduction of irregular warfare training, a process that culminated in the founding of the Escuela de Lanceros (Lancers School) in 1955, an irregular warfare training center inspired by that of the U.S. Army Rangers, and the first of its kind in Latin America. At higher levels of the military echelon, Rojas's innovations included the creation of the Comando General de las Fuerzas Militares (General Command of the Military Forces), home to the Estado Mayor Conjunto (Joint General Staff).⁶

In addition to changes made to the military's structure proper, the Army's standing force was increased from 15,000 in 1950 to 36,000 in 1955, and support forces were assembled under various formats. Thus, former guerrilla fighters and defectors were inserted into units that, while not embedded in the military, did serve in support and intelligence-collecting roles. More importantly, the military unified and centralized the existing police force into a national structure and placed it under the command of the Joint General Staff, with military personnel comprising much of its officer corps. In parallel with the above, the existing intelligence structure, up to then consisting of a small office attached to the Interior Ministry and largely used as a political police, was reformed into an agency directly

responsible to the presidency, the Servicio de Inteligencia Colombiano (SIC, Colombian Intelligence Service). The new agency was given a broad intelligence mandate, along with judicial police capabilities. Simultaneously, the military capitalized on its Korean experience to modernize its intelligence structure.⁷

Beyond its military component, however, the Rojas era also marked the beginning of the government's civic action efforts. Through the Secretaría Nacional de Asistencia Social (SENDAS, National Secretariat for Social Action), economic assistance was directed toward those regions where military operations were conducted, serving a dual purpose: eroding the guerrilla groups' social base and strengthening the military government's.⁸ It is worth noting that this program was under direct control and oversight of the presidency, though Rojas's appointment of his daughter to the post of program director led to a propensity for directing public funds for rather short-lived, populist initiatives.

As a consequence of this government strategy, sectarian violence decreased significantly during the Rojas era. The government's amnesty caused an internal split among the guerrillas, so that while "pure liberals" demobilized, "common liberals"—connected with the Communist Party—refused to do so. At any rate, these results were made possible by the inclusion of two elements of modern counterinsurgency theory into the security effort: a political-social program aimed at dissolving the guerrillas' social support base and promoting desertion, and sustained military pressure through the strengthening of intelligence capabilities and the adoption of irregular warfare tactics.⁹

Counterinsurgency and the Lleras Doctrine of Civil-Military Relations

Four years after his rise to power, the political establishment had grown weary of Rojas, leading to his removal from office in 1957. By that time, the level of political violence throughout the country had decreased significantly, yet two problems remained: first, despite broad demobilization initiatives, a number of guerrilla fighters turned to common banditry; and second, a number of disaffected guerrilla leaders associated with the Colombian Communist Party refused to give up arms and secluded themselves in remote strongholds called *repúblicas independientes* (independent republics).

At the time, Colombia's institutional framework in general and its security establishment in particular were undergoing a transition phase, designed by the newly elected civilian government and aimed at preventing the military from regaining power. Thus, in a speech given before the

military general staff and a wide audience in May 1958, President Alberto Lleras Camargo laid the foundations of what came to be known as the Lleras doctrine. Therein, he defined two independent spheres of government: civilians were to become the sole decision makers in matters of general policy, with no military interference, and in return the military was granted broad autonomy in the conduct of external defense and internal security policy.¹⁰ Laying down this sharp division was instrumental in distancing the military from the general affairs of government, a top priority for the newly elected administration that was emphasized by a failed coup aimed at returning Rojas to power just two weeks before President Lleras's speech. The doctrine, however, also signified an immense difficulty for the successful conduct of a counterinsurgency campaign since, as exponents of British counterinsurgency doctrine have observed, counterinsurgency is an integrated governmental effort, wherein military operations are but one element of a broader government effort. Or, in the words of General Sir Gerald Templer: "The shooting side of this business is only 25 percent of the trouble and the other 75 percent lies in getting the people of this country behind us."¹¹

Alongside the Lleras doctrine, two other reforms were made during the late 1950s with significant effects for the conduct of the counterinsurgency effort. First, the National Police was separated from the Joint General Staff, albeit it remained attached to the Ministry of National Defense. Second, the existing SIC was transformed into the Department Administrativo de Seguridad (Administrative Department of Security, DAS), a civilian agency, and kept under direct supervision of the presidency.¹² In general, the reforms introduced during the Lleras era served to democratize civil-military relations and to shield civilian governance from military interference, but at the same time they increased the number of independent actors in charge of security policy without providing an institutional structure capable of directing and coordinating their efforts. Inasmuch as institutional resources could not be coordinated by any single instrument of government, a significant obstacle emerged for the conduct of any integral counterinsurgency campaign.¹³

The Lleras doctrine was put to the test not long after its public announcement, curtailing an attempt at implementing an integrated counterinsurgency strategy in Colombia. As commander of the Army, General Alberto Ruiz Noboa designed the blueprint for a national-level counterinsurgency strategy named Plan Lazo, which he effectively began to implement upon reaching the post of defense minister. The plan's origins owed much to the combination of three factors: the broadly accepted value of implementing social initiatives aimed at resolving the grievances from

which the guerrillas drew their support; the military's ready acceptance of operational concepts of counterinsurgency warfare promoted by the United States throughout Latin America during the late 1950s and early 1960s; and a broad conception of the military's role as an institution called to be a leading actor in the nation's economic development processes. Based on these broad ideas, the plan called for an integration of the military's combat-proven tactics from past counterinsurgency operations with an extended social development program aimed at pacifying the country once and for all. That is to say, the idea was putting together in a coordinated fashion a number of policy tools already used in the past.¹⁴

With respect to the military component of the campaign, the Army's existing concept of "area control" was put in practice to separate the guerrillas from the civilian population so as to locate the armed groups and neutralize them. For this purpose, a number of tactical instruments were perfected, such as small units specifically charged with the task of penetrating enemy territory to locate and destroy guerrilla units. Operational intelligence capabilities were strengthened, particularly with respect to the development of local intelligence networks, an effort that was articulated through the creation of the Batallón de Inteligencia y Contrainteligencia in 1962. Most notably, special light infantry units were created specifically for counterinsurgency operations, starting with companies Arpón (Harpoon) and Flecha (Arrow) as pilot programs.¹⁵ Support for the military's regular units was also broadened through a greater emphasis on psychological operations and, more importantly, the establishment of local self-defense units and the formal adoption of the "operational control" mechanism, through which National Police units in a given area of operations were subject to military command.

In parallel with these military measures, the Plan Lazo put in motion a number of rural development programs under the coordination of the Comité Nacional de Acción Cívico-Militar (National Civic-Military Action Committee), an organization created within the central government specifically for the purpose of implementing civic action programs, which included regional branches that allowed coordination procedures to be replicated regionally. This institutional structure initiated a broad and ambitious public works program, along with social programs in those areas where military operations were concentrated.¹⁶

The plan's overall outcome was favorable, as the government gradually regained control of the Independent Republics between 1964 and 1965. Yet, General Ruiz Noboa and his staff believed that far broader reforms were needed in order to consolidate and complete the pacification process. These ambitions led Ruiz Noboa to clash with then president Guillermo

León Valencia, resulting in his demotion from active duty and, in the process, the military's abandonment of any attempt to design a national-level grand strategy for pacification. In this manner, General Ruiz Noboa's removal from office became the first tangible demonstration of the Lleras doctrine, just as it foreshadowed the near-impossibility of implementing a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy for years to come. The military, on one hand, was not allowed to design or participate in matters of public policy—particularly social policy—beyond the strict limits set by security operations, since doing so was perceived as a breach of the civil-military rules set forth under the Lleras doctrine. Civilian leaders of government, on the other hand, lacked the institutional tools and professional expertise necessary to appropriately guide the use of military force as an element of a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy.¹⁷ Thus, from this point onwards it became practically impossible to design—let alone implement—a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy. In this manner, until the early 1990s, government efforts to pacify the country were marked by a sort of schizophrenia: while the military developed tactical instruments to obtain tactical victories over the guerrillas, civilians pushed forth reforms aimed at managing the political and social grievances used by the guerrillas to gather support. However, both types of efforts were carried out in isolation from each other, thereby making it impossible to achieve a strategic outcome favorable to the state. Thus, the government's inability to develop a national-scale, integrated counterinsurgency plan caused it to lose the strategic initiative, a loss that would later prove to entail enormous costs.

While the aforementioned circumstances hindered the Colombian government's ability to design and implement a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy, the guerrillas appropriated a range of strategic concepts that allowed them to put in motion much better-founded war plans. Thus, in 1966 the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) was founded by a mixed group of former liberal guerrillas and communist militants expelled from the Independent Republics. An insurgent organization whose ideology combined agrarianism and pro-Soviet Marxism, the FARC embraced the Vietnamese version of Peoples' Warfare, known as Interlocking Warfare.¹⁸ Two years earlier, a group of radical Marxist students, former liberal militants, and popular Christian movement activists had already formed the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN, National Liberation Army), inspired by Ernesto Guevara's Foco strategy.¹⁹ A few years later, in 1968, a number of pro-Chinese dissidents from the Colombian Communist Party established the Ejército de Liberación Popular (EPL, Popular Liberation Army) and

followed the orthodox Maoist concept of Peoples' War.²⁰ Finally, in 1973 another group of former Communist Party militants came together with leftist members of the populist Alianza Nacional Popular (ANAPO, National Popular Alliance) party and give birth to the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19A, April 19th Movement), an organization based on Carlos Marighella's concept of urban guerrillas.²¹ Hence, by the early 1970s the Colombian government was confronted by a broad range of insurgent organizations drawing their organizational and strategic orientation from the entire spectrum of revolutionary doctrines existent in Latin America: Peoples' War, both in its classical Maoist conception and its Vietnamese version; Guevara's Foco strategy; and Marighella's Urban Guerrilla.

The Military Successes against the ELN in Anorí and M-19 in Cauca

Given the difficulties in implementing a comprehensive strategic plan due to the Lleras doctrine, the military opted for the pursuit of tactical victories with strategic implications—that is to say, operations aimed at the insurgents' military annihilation. This was the objective of an operation launched against the ELN in 1974, when the insurgent group concentrated the bulk of its rural units in the municipality of Anorí and the Army devised an operation to destroy it. Based on massive troop deployments and intelligence gathering, the Army initiated a prolonged "search and destroy" operation, integrating helicopters into troop movements. The operation's significant success was in good measure due to the ELN's Foco strategy, since it tended to concentrate its forces in such a way that made them vulnerable if located and cordoned by the military. Government forces came close to the complete annihilation of the ELN, through the deployment of a unit named Comando Operativo No. 10 (Operative Command No. 10), which brought together five light infantry battalions, an air support component from the Air Force, and another unit from the Naval Infantry, in what later was to become the conceptual basis for the creation of mobile brigades. At the end of the operation, the ELN was reduced from its initial 150 combatants to 23,²² but the lack of a national-level plan for exploiting operational success limited Anorí's strategic impact, since the few ELN militants left standing were allowed to disperse and regroup in the eastern plains. They remained there awaiting a new opportunity, which presented itself in the early 1980s when oil extraction began in the department of Arauca, and the group soon found a way to profit from extortion.

These shortcomings were explained by the absence of a national-level strategy which, in turn, was the result of two factors. First and foremost was the legacy of the Lleras doctrine, and second, the military's lack of

sufficient resources to conduct a sustained, national-level campaign. Anorí thus made it clear that nationwide strategic plans could only be designed and thoroughly implemented when sufficient military resources were available; the lack thereof limited implementation to local or, at best, regional levels.

Since the early 1970s, the M-19A group set forth a strategy for developing a rural and an urban *foco* simultaneously. The urban structures were mostly dismantled by government forces during the early 1980s, based on the combination of military and police efforts in response to a series of spectacular operations carried out by the insurgents, including a massive arms theft from a military base and the seizure of the Dominican Republic's Embassy in Bogotá. Under intense pressure, M-19A moved the bulk of its operatives to its rural units, particularly in the Caquetá, Cauca, and Valle del Cauca departments.²³ In 1982, President Belisario Betancur initiated negotiations with M-19A while simultaneously strengthening the Army's presence in Caquetá, including the establishment of the 12th Brigade in the departmental capital, Florencia, alongside a more generalized use of helicopter support.²⁴ Once again, the Lleras doctrine entailed difficulties for the articulation of government efforts: as the civilian government was in the midst of negotiations, the military exercised increasing pressure in both the Caquetá and Cauca departments, yet neither did civilian negotiators use military pressure to their advantage, nor did the military carry out its operations in support of ongoing negotiations.²⁵ At the end of the day, M-19A was forced to the negotiating table due to the gradual loss of its military options as a consequence of the Army's operations in the Cauca region. Nonetheless, the group's near-defeat was not seized by the government as a strategic negotiating advantage, even as the group's remaining urban structures were neutralized after its infamous assault on the Palacio de Justicia (Palace of Justice, the Colombian judiciary's headquarters) in 1985.

The government's campaign against the M-19A insurgent group demonstrated the two main limitations of Colombia's counterinsurgency efforts: the lack of an integrated political-military strategy and the military forces' inability to carry out sustained, national-level operations. Under these circumstances, the military struggle against the ELN and M-19A bore results in good measure because, in both cases, the insurgents were concentrated in limited geographical areas. In fact, when the insurgents chose to concentrate their forces in relatively small areas, the military was able to locate them, surround them, and destroy them. However, when the insurgents were able to spread their resources across the territory and put into practice a nationwide strategy, the military proved unable to deliver significant successes.

The New Civilian Leadership in the Ministry of Defense and the Renovation of the Counterinsurgency Strategy

At the beginning of the 1990s the strategic context had changed both for the government and for the insurgents, due to a new constitution drafted in 1991 with the participation of recently demobilized militants from the M-19A. The constitution mandated a number of significant reforms in government structure, including broader controls on executive power, mandatory earmarking of a portion of the public budget to social programs and a new wave of administrative decentralization, all of which limited the government's ability to develop an integrated security strategy. These reforms, however, also served to restore government legitimacy and democratic credibility, thereby decreasing support for the insurgents' political agenda. The winds of change also brought about a significant innovation in terms of the counterinsurgency campaign: by appointing a civilian to the post of minister of national defense in 1991, President César Gaviria Trujillo signaled an effective break with the Lleras doctrine.²⁶ It seems difficult to overemphasize the importance of this reform for three reasons. For starters, a civilian in charge of the nation's defense policy could effectively integrate the political and military elements necessary in any counterinsurgent campaign, as he could transmit the military's needs to the political establishment as well as oversee the integration of military efforts into a broader plan. Likewise, the arrival of a civilian to the post bore an improvement in resource management to a large, complex, inertia-ridden bureaucracy. Finally, a civilian minister could push forth progress in joint military capabilities, as he was better able than his uniformed predecessors to act as a neutral mediator between the services, particularly given the Navy's and the Air Force's embedded suspicion of a far larger, powerful, and budget-hoarding Army.²⁷

In the meantime, various efforts had been made to augment the military's capacity to develop strategic-level operations. Thus, the 20th Army Brigade had been created in 1986, effectively upgrading this service's intelligence structure from a battalion-level organization to a larger, better-equipped unit. With regard to combat units, a new type of counterinsurgency formation was created, named the "mobile brigade" and composed entirely of professional soldiers organized in light infantry battalions equipped with a light support structure and high mobility assets. These improvements in military capabilities were accompanied by the launch of the *Estrategia Nacional Contra la Violencia* (ENCV, National Strategy against Violence), a policy framework that integrated political measures, civic action programs, anti-money laundering measures, and military efforts into

a comprehensive effort to pacify the country.²⁸ The ENCV succeeded in the northern state of Córdoba, when political and military efforts were combined to fight the EPL. In 1991, the newly formed Mobile Brigade No. 1 was deployed to the area in the so-called “Final Operation” whose success confirmed the military’s augmented ability to conduct effective, sustained regional operations.²⁹ The following year negotiations were initiated and soon thereafter concluded with the Maoist group’s demobilization.

As in the cases of the ELN in Anorí and M-19A in Cauca, the EPL was dealt a fatal blow, in no small measure due to the fact that it had concentrated its forces in an area where the military could deploy with overwhelming force. However, two major problems persisted in terms of counterinsurgency strategy. First, just as the military had gradually improved its ability to conduct regional operations, it still lacked the ability to conduct a sustained, national-level campaign against guerrilla forces that, while spread out across the country, had the ability to conduct large-scale operations (that was the case of FARC and the ELN in the mid-1990s, as shall be seen later). Second, the government was still unable to consolidate its tactical gains into permanent ones, thereby avoiding fleeting victories and prohibiting the insurgents’ return to any given area once government forces had left. This was the case of the campaign against the EPL in Córdoba, where once the Maoist insurgents were expelled by the Army, FARC and illegal self-defense groups closely associated with narcotics trafficking rapidly stepped in to take control of the area. This lack of follow-up efforts in both time and space was aggravated when the National Police director, General Rosso José Serrano, initiated a plan during the mid-1990s to transform the police into a predominantly urban security and counter-narcotics force. This caused a functional vacuum, which became evident when numerous police units under increasing insurgent pressure retreated into large urban areas, leaving scores of small-town rural communities unprotected from the guerrillas.³⁰ At any rate, the ENCV did not live up to expectations, in good part because during the early 1990s, the Colombian government had to confront the growing threat of narco-terrorism, led by Pablo Escobar and the Medellín Cartel.³¹ However, the ENCV’s shortcomings also had to do with the military’s still latent inability to conduct large-scale, national operations.

While the government forces’ resource limitations became evident, FARC and the ELN managed not only to survive but indeed thrived on the exploitation of three types of resources that became increasingly available between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. First was the widespread growth of the illegal narcotics business, supported by the growth of large-scale coca leaf plantations across Colombia’s southern regions. Second,

though kidnapping for ransom had been an accepted tactic by guerrilla forces for quite a while, a wave of economic liberalization measures during the late 1980s permitted an unprecedented inflow of foreign investment into Colombia, making it possible for the insurgents to systematically target large multinational corporations for extortion and thereby develop a multimillion-dollar business. Third, as part of successive civilian governments' attempts to promote democracy and social justice, Colombia began a process of political and administrative decentralization during the late 1980s. The end result was strategically disastrous, as the measures adopted meant the transfer of political and economic power to the lowest levels of public administration, which, given the already-mentioned limitations of security forces, the government was incapable of protecting and thereby shielding from insurgent extortion or cooptation.³²

Given this newfound availability of financial resources, both FARC and the ELN embarked on broad strategies for expansion. Hence, during the course of its VII Conferencia (Seventh Conference), FARC designed a strategic plan for overthrowing the government and seizing power, which called for a 30,000-strong guerrilla army and conducting armed actions throughout the country. Following this plan, the group's militants increased from roughly 1,000 in 1982 to an estimated 7,000 by 1989.³³ The ELN also pursued expansion plans, though not as ambitious as those of FARC. The *elenos* (ELN militants) did make a concerted effort to project the group's actions and expansion from the eastern Llanos toward the Pacific coast and the south, leading it to grow from 190 militants in 1978 to 2,600 by 1990.³⁴ Beyond their numerical growth, both groups developed increasingly sophisticated operational concepts, as well as new tactical recipes. Most notably, FARC prepared to make the leap from guerrilla warfare to mobile warfare, including operations like large-area ambushes and assaults on military bases. These innovations were to be executed by newly created battalion-type combat units called *columnas móviles* (mobile columns) and special operations forces, such as the Columna Móvil Teófilo Forero.³⁵ Meanwhile, the ELN's attempt to emulate this strategic leap failed due to its more limited access to resources and problems with organizational cohesion.

The Military Reforms to Confront the Security Crisis in the Late 1990s

In light of the above combination of the military's operational limitations and the insurgents' strategic leap, the stage was set for a broad security crisis. This was evidenced by the FARC's success in a series of large-scale operations launched against military bases and combat units between

1996 and 1998, including its attack on Las Delicias military base (August 1996), its seizure of the Cerro Patascoy military outpost (December 1997), its ambush of an entire counterguerilla company in El Billar (March 1998), and its assault on the National Police's Miraflores counternarcotics base (August 1998).³⁶

Further complicating the scenario, the Colombian government's need to concentrate its efforts on combating FARC opened a window of opportunity for ELN growth, making it a strategic free rider. At the same time, the deteriorating security situation and the expansion of drug-trafficking stimulated the emergence of powerful illegal self-defense groups. This development brought about two negative consequences for the conduct of the counterinsurgency campaign: an erosion of government legitimacy among certain population groups and the involvement of a minority portion of the military in the activities of the self-defense groups. Thus, by the end of the 1990s the Colombian conflict had evolved into a three-sided war, wherein the democratic government was pitted against (on one end) two groups of determined, well-financed insurgents and (on the other end) an array of equally well-financed and brutal self-defense groups.

The widespread perception of a security crisis instilled strong reactions across the Colombian political spectrum. This was particularly true within the military, leading to a number of reforms that would permit a dramatic shift in the strategic scenario years later. Based on the premise that FARC was the premier threat to national security, correcting the military's inability to anticipate and counter the insurgents' concentration of forces prior to launching an attack was established as the first order of business. This amounted to acknowledging that FARC had developed a superior ability to concentrate and project its military resources in remote areas of the country, thereby allowing it to seize remote military outposts by surprise with overwhelming force superiority, in a manner that was both more agile and speedy than the military's response capabilities.

In this context, reforms were initiated to provide the military with better instruments to anticipate large guerrilla concentrations and counter them, thus denying the insurgents the ability to conduct large-scale operations. This was done by procuring significant upgrades in the military's existing intelligence, mobility, and firepower assets, as well as by restructuring its personnel system. With regard to the latter, measures were taken to build a professional fighting force, increasing the number of volunteer soldiers from a few thousand in the mid-1990s to 55,000 by 2002.³⁷ This growth in professional personnel allowed the mobile brigade model, successfully tested against the EPL in Córdoba, to be significantly expanded. This

increase in the number of available mobile brigades, in turn, allowed for the creation of the *Fuerza de Despliegue Rápido* (FUDRA, Rapid Deployment Force), a division-level force made up of three mobile brigades and a special forces brigade. Personnel reforms were accompanied by the creation of the Army's own airlift unit, the *Brigada de Aviación* (Aviation Brigade) in 1995, a unit equipped primarily with helicopters aimed at providing the Army with its own air transport capability, thus sidestepping traditional interservice rivalries between it and the Air Force, upon whom ground units had traditionally depended for such capabilities.³⁸ It is worth noting that because this capability was initially built up with a combination of Colombian and U.S. funds, until 2002 the American-funded share of the fleet was restricted to missions directly tied to the United States–led counternarcotics effort in Colombia. Despite these restrictions, the helicopters' availability for counternarcotics missions allowed Colombian aerial assets to be freed for counterinsurgency operations. With respect to the military's intelligence capabilities, following a series of human rights violation accusations, the 20th Brigade was dissolved and the *Centro de Inteligencia Militar de Ejército* (CIME, Army Military Intelligence Center) was created in its place, with a renewed emphasis on the use of technical intelligence resources.³⁹ Finally, a crucial reform was made throughout the military education and training programs, with a new emphasis on counterinsurgency operations, exemplified by the Army's publication of an updated field manual dedicated exclusively to irregular warfare in 1999.⁴⁰ Though slower than other reforms in reaping visible benefits, changes made in education and training contributed to a slow but steady improvement of the Colombian military's battlefield performance.

The military's reforms were first battle-tested in 1998, when FARC concentrated more than 1,000 combatants and launched an attack on the town of Mitú, capital of Vaupés, a eastern border department deep inside the Amazon basin. Though the guerrillas managed to take hold of the town for a period of 24 hours, the military was able to drive out the insurgents and cause significant casualties before they were able to disperse their forces.⁴¹ After the iconic battle, FARC was never again able to successfully launch equivalent large-scale operations characteristic of mobile warfare. At any rate, though Mitú marked a turning point in the counterinsurgency campaign, its impact on the strategic scenario was not immediately felt, due to the beginning of peace conversations between President Andrés Pastrana and FARC later that same year. Part of the government's concessions so that dialogue could begin was the establishment of a 42,000-kilometer demilitarized zone (DMZ), which FARC subsequently used to store and

accumulate weapons, train new units, and launch nationwide operations. This opportunity for resource accumulation allowed the insurgents to deploy in 2001 four battalion-size mobile columns, which were put into operation using the DMZ as a strategic rearguard.⁴²

The schizophrenia between the military modernization process and the government's pursuit of peace negotiations amounted to the resurrection of the Lleras doctrine, wherein civilian leaders in government pursued peace while the military waged war, with little or no coordination between the two. The outcome of this period was doubly frustrating: on one hand, military operations were handicapped by the group's ability to use the DMZ as a safe haven; on the other hand, government negotiators failed to capitalize on the state's military superiority to their advantage. At any rate, the failed peace process came to an end in February 2002, when President Pastrana ordered the military occupation of the DMZ by means of Operation Tanatos. However, this offensive did not represent a relevant blow to FARC, as the group's commanders had been anticipating the negotiations' breakdown and had ordered the area's gradual evacuation prior to the military's offensive.

The Democratic Security Policy of the Uribe Administration and a Shift in the Strategic Balance

Following the failed peace talks, the election of Alvaro Uribe Velez to the presidency in 2002 marked a new phase in the evolution of Colombian counterinsurgency practice. Soon after reaching office, Uribe Vélez set down the guiding principles of the *Politica de Defensa y Seguridad Democratica* (PDSD, Democratic Security and Defense Policy), an institutional heir of the ENCV launched by the Gaviria government a decade earlier. Based on the priority accorded by the Uribe administration to face the internal conflict, the PSDS delineated a comprehensive effort aimed at exerting military pressure on the country's illegal armed groups simultaneously with a standing offer for demobilization.⁴³ Thus, the PSDS set the basis for increased budgetary support of the military effort and for direct coordination of all political and military elements of the campaign. In fact, these two fundamental policy instruments—military pressure and offers for demobilization—were used in a variety of stick-and-carrot combinations with regard to each of the main armed groups. While FARC's refusal to negotiate with the Uribe Velez government made it the primary target of a sustained military campaign, the ELN began negotiations in late 2005, following a slow but steady process of attrition. The illegal self-defense forces, in turn, began negotiating as early as 2003, a process that culminated with their demobilization between 2005 and 2007.

In military terms, the PDSO did not incorporate many conceptual innovations per se, but it did bring together, organize into a coherent whole, and secure proper financial support for a number of existing ideas. Thus, the campaign's primary objective reflected a traditional strategic principle of counterinsurgency called "area control" or "territorial control." This concept emphasized the importance of reasserting military control over territory and population, based on the premise that if the insurgents were cut off from their civilian support bases, they could be located, pressured and, if necessary, destroyed with relative ease. Therefore, the campaign incorporated an operational concept whereby counterguerrilla units grouped into mobile brigades were tasked with sweeping insurgent territory and clearing it from guerrilla combat forces. Once the task was completed, police and locally recruited security forces were deployed in lieu of the mobile brigades, in order to consolidate government presence and authority. The effort was complemented by limiting the insurgents' freedom of movement, through the deployment of high mountain battalions across the passes used by guerrillas in the Andean mountain chain as well as the implementation of a road-protection program named Plan Meteoro (Meteor Plan).⁴⁴ At the same time, a number of Naval Infantry units were tasked with controlling river transit, protecting local commerce from insurgent raids, and denying the guerrillas freedom of movement in the densely interconnected river systems of Colombia.⁴⁵ The simultaneous, articulated, and sustained execution of the above efforts amounted to the military's first strategic plan since General Ruiz Novoa's Plan Lazo decades earlier. The magnitude and geographical scope of the programs carried out under the PDSO, however, had no comparable precedent in Colombian military history.

It is difficult to overstate the strategic impact of the PDSO. Not only did it bring about a significant reduction in violence levels across the country, but it also dealt significant blows to the insurgent forces, such as the destruction of FARC's forces deployed around the capital, by means of Operation Libertad I (Freedom I).⁴⁶ As the campaign developed, however, some of its shortcomings made themselves known, as explained below. First, it seems increasingly clear that the military's strategic concept against FARC was to a large degree based on its past successes against the ELN in Anorí, M-19A in Cauca, and the EPL in Córdoba. Thus, it called for encircling the area where the enemy's main force was concentrated and overwhelming it with superior troop numbers and firepower. In the case of FARC, for this purpose, an 18,000-strong task force named Fuerza de Tarea Omega (FTO) was put together by joining the FUDRA and a number of additional mobile brigades with Air Force and Naval Infantry

assets. This force was deployed in the sparsely populated southern part of the country, where the insurgents kept their main combat units and logistical infrastructure.⁴⁷ The operation, however, had mixed results: on one hand, large quantities of equipment and infrastructure were destroyed, yet on the other hand, guerrilla casualties and captures were limited. Explaining these results requires a look at FARC's strategic tradition. Because the group's military behavior follows the dictates of the Peoples' War, time is considered a strategic asset that plays in its favor, and large-scale battle is shied away from unless optimal conditions are met. Therefore, FARC avoided a direct confrontation with a potentially catastrophic impact on its survival, and chose to redeploy some of its units to other regions. For these reasons, the end result of the FTO's deployment was the destruction of FARC's physical support infrastructure in the Caquetá and Guaviare departments but, contrary to military plans, no decisive victory was achieved. The operation was a relevant success, but not a total victory. A second increasingly visible limitation is that the PDSD's implementation eventually strained personnel and financial resources. In this sense, the policy became a victim of its own success, since steady improvements in general security conditions reduced the motivation of the public to support the investment of additional resources in consolidating a campaign already deemed "successful." Likewise, the military's rapid increase in troop levels was largely done at the expense of shorter training cycles and further pressure on an officer corps already too small for the size of the force under its command.⁴⁸ In fact, by early 2006 the officers-to-troops ratio was the lowest in 15 years, with obvious negative effects for troop performance in the context of decentralized, politically sensitive operations, typical of any counterinsurgency campaign.

A third issue that limited PDSD's effectiveness has to do with FARC's proven ability to adapt to changing strategic circumstances. The group's abandonment of mobile warfare and its return to guerrilla warfare operations after 2002 meant the reduction of its force exposure, combat contact, and attrition rates. Therefore, the PDSD's military campaign had to face the challenge of sustainability. FARC's return to guerrilla warfare put a strain on the security forces, whose limited resources did not permit decreasing marginal returns in operational efficiency.

Within this context, the Policy of Consolidation of Democratic Security (PCSD in Spanish) that was promoted during the second term of President Uribe attempted to answer some of the mentioned limitations.⁴⁹ Initially, this new approach was conceived, basically, as a vision different from the first version of the Policy of Defense and Democratic Security. In fact, the translation of the new political guidelines contained in the War Plan

“Consolidation” did not introduce major changes. However, some innovations made in the following years would prove to be critical. To begin with, the so-called Policy of Consolidation was inaugurated. This effort, promoted by the Ministry of Defense and led by the presidency of the republic, had as an institutional axis the Centro de Coordinación de Acción Integral (CCAI, Center for Coordination of Integral Action) established in 2004.⁵⁰ This organization worked as a mechanism to join two types of activities. On one hand, the so-called Integral Action of the military forces focused on the nonmilitary dimension of the counterinsurgency aimed to gain the support of the population, from local infrastructure works developed by the Corps of Engineers of the Army to the provision of healthcare by the military medical personnel. On the other hand, the effort of the rest of the civil public entities directed toward the regions where the guerrilla presence was stronger. This model was tested for the first time in the south of the department of Meta and in the north of the department of Caquetá under the formula known as Plan of Integral Consolidation of La Macarena. Later on, the model was extended to 11 other regions of the country.

Simultaneously, the Colombian military forces began to strengthen their special operations capabilities. Although the most visible change of this process was the creation of the Joint Command of Special Operations (CCOES in Spanish), the truth is that the process was lengthier and complex. This strategy of innovation was the implicit acknowledgment of the fact that it was impossible to modernize at the same speed a large defense apparatus such as the Colombian one. As a result, the decision was made to keep a slower rate of improvement for the military forces in general and dedicate special attention to the development of certain key tools. To do this, the first battalion of commandos that had been created in the late 1990s was used as a model to create eight other units of the same type. Furthermore, intelligence was strengthened both in terms of technical capacities—signals, images, etc.—as in the use of human resources.⁵¹ Finally, an important effort was made to develop certain air capabilities. To that effect, helicopter pilots were trained on tasks of air infiltration and, above all, a precision bombing capability was established with the arrival of ground attack Super Tucano EMB-314 aircraft in 2007. The result was an operational formula that integrated intelligence, precision bombing, and special operation units.

Although in a less visible manner, as a way of combining regular units with the new capacities of integral action and special operations that maximized their strategic impact, an emphasis was put on the application of joint operational concepts. The application of these new concepts led to a

modification in the organic structure of the Military Forces. Since the early 1950s, the chain of command had been structured with a commander general who exerted the function of maximum military authority upon which the Army, Navy, and Air Force commanders depended.⁵² However, this subordination was more formal than real to the extent in which the commanders of the different services had a strong administrative autonomy and almost complete operational independence.

Such institutional order started to change with the creation of the Omega Task Force in 2004, given that this formation became directly dependent upon the commander general. This tendency would be strengthened with the creation of the so-called Decisive Action Joint Force (FUCAD in Spanish). This tendency would be complemented by constituting the Joint Command of the Caribbean as of 2004. It integrated the Army, Navy, and Air Force units present in the north of the country under a single commander who also depended upon the general commander. As a result, in the second half of the 2000s, the military forces had made significant progress regarding the execution of joint operations and the commander general went from being a purely administrative head to becoming an operational leader.

Based on all these new capabilities, the Colombian military forces modified their strategy. The new emphasis of the counterinsurgency campaign focused on neutralizing the insurgent heads. To some extent, the idea behind this effort was to combine the pressure that regular troops exerted on FARC's rearguard areas with a series of blows against the leaders of the organization in order to cause its collapse. The most successful occasion when the new strategic concept was tested was in the "Alcatraz Operation" in which FARC Fronts 35 and 37 were destroyed and their leader, "Martin Caballero," was killed.⁵³ The result was the virtual disappearance of FARC from the Montes de Maria region. During the year 2008, the PCSD would harvest its most spectacular successes when two members of the FARC Secretariat—Raúl Reyes and Iván Ríos—were killed. Also, the most politically relevant hostages in the hands of the FARC—which included former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt and three U.S. military contractors—were liberated as a result of the famous Operación Jaque (Checkmate Operation).⁵⁴

However, the strategic design conceived within the PCSD framework was emitting strong signs of trouble. Indeed, a series of factors were combined so that the blows that led to the neutralizing of the guerrilla cadres were not successful in destroying the structures under their control. To begin with, as mentioned before, the modernization of the military apparatus was concentrated on a few units but did not transform, at the same

speed, the rest of the military forces. Such asymmetry tended to grow because the aforementioned strengthening of the commander general as an operational leader generated, in practice, a dual command structure. In fact, the establishment of key structures under the commander general such as the aforementioned Omega Task Force, FUCAD, and CCOES placed under his control the best units of the military forces. Meanwhile, the Army Command retained control over a number of mobile brigades as well as the territorial brigades which were integrated by recruits and basically in charge of the protection of the economic infrastructure and defensive operations.

Another factor complicated the scenario even more. The geography made it very difficult for the military forces to use all the resources necessary to create the conditions for a decisive defeat of the guerrilla structures. In this regard, there were three key factors. On the one hand, many zones where FARC and the ELN had refuge were difficult to access, due to the mountainous nature (south of Tolima), the forest (Putumayo), or the combination of both (Catatumbo). On the other hand, a number of these regions were at the border creating an additional difficulty at the time of trying to surround the guerrilla groups. This way, the characteristics of the terrain had the tendency to dilute the military pressure on the guerrilla and made it difficult for the military forces to gain a decisive numeric superiority. In addition, the scattered deployment of the Colombian Army units increased the tendency toward the dispersion of the military assets throughout the whole country. The guerrilla withdrawal to its rearguard areas in the mid-2000s was not matched by the rearrangement of the Army's deployment. In fact, the Army's territorial units were tied to their territorial jurisdiction and, therefore, they could not transfer their troops.

Finally, a factor reducing the effectiveness of the campaign was also the guerrillas' change of behavior after the death of Manuel Marulanda, the arrival of Alfonso Cano to the FARC Secretariat meant a deepening of the guerrillas' shift towards a more irregular operational behavior. This change was crystallized in what the guerrillas called a "Plan for the Revolutionary Rebirth of the Masses" issued by Cano. It basically emphasized the return to guerrilla warfare—using snipers, mines, etc.—the employment of militia clandestine structures in armed actions, and the intensification of political work. From the Army's point of view, this shift meant a challenge of great magnitude due to two reasons. On the one hand, the guerrillas adopted tactics that allowed hitting the military units and fleeing immediately without exposing themselves to the troop's reaction. On the other hand, the use of militia groups meant that many of the insurgents

responsible for the attacks were not full-time members of the insurgent fronts but collaborators who did not use uniforms. Once these collaborators committed the attacks, they hid easily among the civil population. This way, the guerrilla networks became increasingly less vulnerable to Army operations.

The Government of Juan Manuel Santos and the Sword of Honor Plan (*Plan Espada de Honor*)

Faced with such changes in the security threat, the answer of the state took the form of a new campaign plan: the “Sword of Honor.” The design of this new military effort departed from a careful analysis of FARC. Based on this work, the organizational architecture was identified as a network composed by many uneven structures with a few of them playing critical strategic roles, while others had only a symbolic value. From this perspective, dismantling the operational capabilities of the guerrillas meant, basically, destroying these key fronts since, once neutralized, the organization would not only lose its “teeth” but its skeleton would be completely disarticulated.

A series of task forces was created as tools to execute this dismantling process. They operated as formations responsible for leading the offensive. In fact, the employment of task forces had begun years before. In fact, the Omega Task Force, in charge of operations in La Macarena region, the task force of Nudo del Paramillo, and the task force of Southern Tolima had been created previously. However, “Sword of Honor” multiplied the number of this type of formations up to a total of nine and reconfigured their capabilities. In fact, the commanders of these units were in charge of a whole range of military (kinetic) and nonmilitary (nonkinetic) tools. In this regard, the hard core of each task force was composed by a certain number of mobile brigades. As well, a criminal investigation police unit and an intelligence structure were added. Finally, each task force was supported by a prosecutor specialized in terrorism and worked in coordination with the Unit of Territorial Consolidation of the presidency of the Republic which was in charge of the implementation of socioeconomic development programs.

With this set of tools, the first goal of the task forces was to dismantle the armed capacity of the key structures of FARC and the ELN. For that, three lines of action were developed. First, an effort focused on neutralizing the middle-ranking cadres of the fronts was implemented; second, operations were launched to demobilize, capture, or kill the permanent combatants that were part of the hard core of these structures. Finally, the clandestine militias that integrated the so-called “terrorist support

networks” were identified, captured, and prosecuted. At the same time, a special effort was made to dismantle the system that made possible the fronts’ operations and generated their armed capabilities. As part of this effort, the financial infrastructure of guerrilla groups was attacked. In this sense, the coordination among intelligence agencies and criminal investigation police was improved. The strategy also included an escalation of the campaign to destroy illicit crops both through aerial spraying and through manual eradication. Simultaneously, key steps were taken towards establishing a strategy against illegal mining. Finally, the traditional strategy of demobilization was complemented with measures to prevent child recruitment by insurgent organizations.

The results of the “Sword of Honor” proved to be impressive. Particularly, the effort to degrade the command and control structure of the guerrillas was very successful, if one takes into account that during the period between August 2011 and December 2013 a total of 41 FARC leaders—including the head of the organization, Alfonso Cano—and 14 of the ELN were killed, captured or demobilized. The effect of these operations is easy to imagine if it takes into account the key role of the neutralized leaders to keep the cohesion of their respective organizations and the enormous difficulties for replacing individuals whose career at the interior of the guerrilla groups could have more than two decades.

As for the wearing out of the financial structure of the guerrillas, it is key to remember that both FARC and the ELN had developed a considerably diversified economic portfolio where the fruits of drug trafficking and illegal mining were combined. In this respect, the efforts against these illegal businesses were direct blows against the treasury of FARC and the ELN. The reduction of the coca crops from 61,812 hectares to 47,790 between 2010 and 2012 had a substantial effect on the guerrilla’s finances if it is taken into consideration that these groups controlled, either directly or indirectly, around 80 percent of the crops in the country. To these success it may add a parallel increase in cocaine seizures that went from 155 tons to more than 187 in the same period. In parallel, an effort was prompted to fight against the criminal mining that had become the second largest source of income for illegal armed groups. In this regard, the volume of the police and military forces assigned to this task was increased and a new legal framework was established in order to make the intervention possible.

Overall, one of the most innovative elements included in “Sword of Honor” was the development of a specific course of action to dismantle the clandestine militia networks. In order to face these structures, the task forces were endowed with two tools. First, they created intelligence fusion centers

that could allow a more effective identification of the militia members, and second, they integrated criminal investigation police detachments known as Grupos Operativos de Investigación Criminal (GROIC, Operational Groups of Criminal Investigation) in charge of the collection of evidence to prosecute clandestine guerrilla collaborators. As mentioned, the process of disarticulation of the guerrilla's networks was supported by prosecutors specialized in terrorism. The result of this effort was impressive. To begin with, the number of FARC members who were captured increased substantially. In fact, captures went from 1,544 during the months from January to October of 2010 to 2,183 in the same period of 2013. Further, cases prepared by officers of the Criminal Investigation Police were more solid. As a consequence, defendants were prosecuted and convicted in a significantly higher proportion.

Such combination of factors led to a gradual strategic weakening of the guerrillas. Several kinds of data provide evidence of this. To begin with, the number of members of terrorist organizations substantially decreased. Particularly, the number of FARC militants fell from 9,000 to 7,000 between the years 2011 and 2013 (a reduction of approximately 20 percent), while ELN membership decreased to barely 1,200 members. Within this context, the fact that part of the losses of both organizations was caused by individual demobilizations is significant. In fact, the number of members who chose to surrender voluntarily grew from 1,140 in 2012 to 1,350 in 2013 (an increase of more than 18 percent). This jump is particularly significant when you consider that it happened in the context of a rapid decline in the number of members of armed groups. In sum, the guerrillas were fewer in number, and they were more likely to demobilize.

Under these circumstances, FARC was in a deep military crisis when the peace talks with the Colombian State started in November 2012. However, during the negotiations, the strategic balance has shifted as a consequence of two factors. On the one hand, the position of the Santos administration has weakened as a result of the internal opposition to the peace process and the increasingly difficult economic situation. On the other hand, FARC has combined waves of attacks against the economic infrastructure, violent mass mobilizations and a vigorous strategic communications campaign to gain the upper hand over the government. This way, the negotiations could become another failed attempt to make peace or lead to a badly designed agreement. However, it is very likely they will not put an end to the Colombian internal violence.

Notes

1. A previous version of this chapter was published under the title “A Long Road to Victory: Developing Counterinsurgency Strategy in Colombia,” authored by Román D. Ortiz and Nicolas Urrutia in *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century*, vol. 3, *International Perspectives*, ed. James J. F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger Security, 2007).

2. Rafael Pardo, *La historia de las guerras* (Bogotá: Ediciones B Colombia, 2004), 396–97.

3. See Russell W. Ramsey, *Guerrilleros y soldados* (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1981).

4. For a thorough look into the events that led Rojas to power, see: Silvia Galvis y Alberto Donadio, *El Jefe Supremo: Rojas Pinilla en la Violencia y en el poder* (Bogotá: Planeta, 1988), 249–56.

5. A comprehensive account of the impact of U.S. military cooperation with the Colombian military during the 1950s can be found in: Saúl Mauricio Rodríguez Hernández, *La influencia de los Estados Unidos en el Ejército colombiano: 1951–1959* (Bogotá: La Carreta Editores, 2005).

6. Eduardo Pizarro Leongómez, “La profesionalización militar en Colombia (III): Los regímenes militares (1953–1958),” *Análisis Político*, no. 3 (Enero–Abril 1988): 20–39.

7. Pardo, *La historia de las guerras*, 407–11.

8. Ramsey, *Guerrilleros y soldados*, 239.

9. See, for instance: Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966).

10. Francisco Leal Buitrago, *La seguridad nacional a la deriva. Del Frente Nacional a la Posguerra Fría* (Bogotá: AlfoOmega, CESO–UNIANDES, FLACSO, 2002), 35–41.

11. Gerald Templer, cited by Simon Smith, “General Templer and Counterinsurgency in Malaya: Hearts and Minds, Intelligence and Propaganda,” *Intelligence and National Security* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 65.

12. César Torres del Río, *Fuerzas Armadas y Seguridad Nacional* (Bogotá: Planeta, 2000), 86–87.

13. On the importance of coordinated command authority in counterinsurgency operations, see: John Deverell, “Lecciones de la campaña contrainsurgente en Irlanda del Norte” in *Policía Nacional: Una fuerza para la consolidación*, Serie Propuestas 3, ed. Román D. Ortiz, María Victoria Llorente, and Nicolas Urrutia (Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz, May 2008).

14. More details on the Plan “Lazo” in Camilo Riaño, “El ‘Plan Lazo’,” *Revista del Ejército*, no. 78 (February 1986): 21–23.

15. Fuerzas Militares de Colombia—Ejército Nacional, “Apuntamientos y experiencias contra bandoleros,” *Revista de infantería* 7 (Bogotá: 1964).

16. Ramsey, *Guerrilleros y soldados*, 235.

17. In the view of Francisco Leal, the design and implementation of defense policy came to be regarded by elected officials as a strictly technical matter, thus

making it unnecessary and even counterproductive for them to have an active role in the process. In this sense, just as macroeconomic policy was largely left to the hands of technocrats, defense and security were left to uniformed men. See: Francisco Leal Buitrago, *El oficio de la Guerra—La seguridad nacional en Colombia* (Bogotá: TM Editores, 1994), 91.

18. See: Román D. Ortiz, “La guerrilla mutante,” in *En la encrucijada: Colombia en el siglo XXI*, ed. Francisco Leal Buitrago (Bogotá: CESO—UniAndes—Grupo Editorial Norma, 2006), 323–56.

19. See: Carlos Medina Gallego, *ELN: una historia contada a dos voces* (Bogotá: Rodríguez Quito Editores, 1996).

20. See: Pardo, *La historia de las guerras*, 441–44.

21. *Ibid.*, 459–65.

22. Hernán Hurtado Vallejo, “Operación Anorí: golpe al corazón del ELN,” in *Hablan los generales*, comp. Glenda Martínez Osorio (Bogotá: Norma, 2006), 145–74.

23. In Colombia, a “department” is an administrative region with a level of political autonomy.

24. Details on the military modernization in the 1980s in Francisco Leal Buitrago, *La seguridad nacional a la deriva*, 60–73.

25. For an insider’s account of the process’s coordination difficulties, see: Rafael Pardo, *De primera mano. Colombia 1986–1994: Entre conflictos y esperanzas* (Bogotá: CEREC—Grupo Editorial Norma, 1996), 93–146.

26. *Ibid.*, 311–50.

27. Regarding the evolution of the Colombian defense budget, see: Yaneth Giha Tobar, Hector Riveros Reyes, y Andrés Soto Velasco, “El gasto militar en Colombia: aspectos macroeconómicos y microeconómicos,” *Revista de la CEPAL*, no. 69 (Diciembre 1999): 163–180.

28. For a review of the early 1990’s reforms, see: Rafael Pardo, *De primera mano*, 311–349 and also Francisco Leal Buitrago, *La seguridad nacional a la deriva*, 75–106.

29. Hugo Tovar, “Operación final contra el EPL,” in *Hablan los generales*, comp. Glenda Martínez Osorio (Bogotá: Norma, 2006), 191–203.

30. For a look into the police’s internal debates on this matter, see: María Victoria Llorente, “Perfil de la Policía Colombiana,” in *Reconocer la Guerra para Construir la Paz*, edited by Malcolm Deas and María Victoria Llorente (Bogotá: Editorial Norma, Ediciones Uniandes, FESCOL, 1999), 457–60.

31. See: Pardo, *De primera mano*, 425–468.

32. This argument is thoroughly presented in Ortiz, “La guerrilla mutante,” 326–30. Also, empirical research on the strategic effects of decentralization can be found in: Fabio Sánchez y Mario Chacón, “Conflicto, Estado y descentralización: del progreso social a la disputa armada por el control local,” in *Documentos CEDE*, 2005–33 (Bogotá: CEDE-UniAndes, 2005).

33. Paul E. Saskiewicz, *The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People’s Army (FARC-EP): Marxist-Leninist Insurgency or Criminal Enterprise?* (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 32–33. It is worth noting that, according to official

figures, FARC would grow to have more than 20,000 men-in-arms in 2002. See: “¿El ocaso de las FARC y el ELN?,” *El Espectador* (Bogotá: April 10, 2014).

34. According to some analysts, this growth allowed the ELN to augment its “combatant fronts” from 7 in 1978 to 38 by 1989. See Andres Penate, “El Sendero Estrategico del ELN: Del idealismo guevarista al clientelismo armado,” *Documento de Trabajo* No. 15 (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Economico, March 1998), 21, <http://www.plataformademocratica.org/Publicacoes/3474.pdf>. Accessed November 20, 2006.

35. See, for instance: Román D. Ortiz, “Insurgent Strategies in the Post–Cold War: The Case of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 25, no. 2 (March–April 2002): 127–44.

36. Andrés Villamizar, *Fuerzas Militares para la Guerra. La agenda pendiente de la reforma militar* (Bogotá: Fundación Seguridad y Democracia, 2003), 21–24.

37. Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Memorias al Congreso 2000-2001* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, October 2001), 141.

38. For a detailed account of reforms carried out during this period by the Colombian military, see: Thomas Marks, *Colombian Army Adaptation to FARC Insurgency* (Carlyle Strategic Studies Institute—U.S. Army War College, 2002).

39. See: Andrés Villamizar, *La reforma de la inteligencia: un imperativo democrático* (Bogotá: Fundación Seguridad y Democracia, 2004).

40. Fuerzas Militares de Colombia—Ejército Nacional, *Reglamento de operaciones en combate irregular* (Bogotá: Primera División, 1999).

41. Villamizar, *Fuerzas Militares para la Guerra*, 25.

42. Ortiz, “La guerrilla mutante,” 339.

43. Presidencia de la República—Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática* (Bogotá: Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, 2003).

44. Details on the Plan “Meteoro” in “Plan Meteoro para proteger carreteras,” *Servicio de Noticias del Estado* (Bogotá: October 2, 2002), http://historico.presidencia.gov.co/prensa_new/sne/2002/octubre/12/12102002.htm. Accessed April 10, 2015, and “Anuncian 20 nuevos grupos de ‘Plan Meteoro’ para carreteras,” *Servicio de Noticias del Estado* (Bogotá: March 1, 2006), http://www.viajaporcolombia.com/noticias/anuncian-20-nuevos-grupos-de-plan-meteoro-para-carreteras_1334. Accessed April 10, 2015.

45. Interview with RA Luis Alfredo Yance Villamil (Retired), former commander of the Colombian Naval Infantry, February 2004.

46. For an insider’s account of the operation, see: Reinaldo Castellanos, “Operación Libertad Uno: la Política de Seguridad Democrática en acción,” in *Hablan los generales*, comp. Glenda Martinez Osorio (Bogotá: Norma, 2006), 311–34.

47. A summary overview of the military’s findings of significant support infrastructure in the south can be seen in: Carlos Alberto Ospina, “El Plan Patriota como Estrategia Militar,” in *Sostenibilidad de la Seguridad Democrática* (Bogotá: Fundación Seguridad y Democracia, 2005), 41–50.

48. For a debate about the limits and problems of the Colombian military’s rapid growth, see: Juliana Chávez Echeverri, Lorenzo Morales Regueros, and Mauricio

Vargas Vergnaud, “¿El tamaño importa?: Formas de pensar el fortalecimiento militar en Colombia,” *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, no. 16 (Bogota: Universidad de los Andes, October 2003): 105–114.

49. Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Policy of Consolidation of the Democratic Security* (Bogota: Imprenta Nacional, 2007), 27–47.

50. Details about the evolution of the Policy of Consolidation in Unidad Administrativa para la Consolidación Territorial, *Lineamientos de la Política Nacional de Consolidación y Reconstrucción Territorial- PNCRT* (Bogota: Presidencia de la República, January 2014), 17–21, http://www.consolidacion.gov.co/themes/danland/descargas/entidad/planeacion/POLITICA_NACIONAL_DE_CONSOLIDACION_Y_RECONSTRUCCION_TERRITORIAL_PNCRT.pdf. Accessed January 15, 2015.

51. An analysis of the intelligence modernization during Uribe’s administration and its impact on special operations in Douglas Porch and Jorge Delgado, “Masters of Today: Military Intelligence and Counterinsurgency in Colombia, 1990–2009,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 21, no. 2 (June 2010), 277–302.

52. The creation of the commander general position by Decree 835 of April 16, 1951, *Diario Oficial* No. 7.595 (Bogota: Imprenta Nacional de Colombia, May 4, 1951).

53. More details in “Así se tendió el cerco a Martín Caballero en Montes de María” *El Tiempo* (Bogota: October 26, 2007).

54. A description of the “Checkmate Operation” in Juan Carlos Torres, *Operación Jaque: La verdadera historia* (Bogotá: Planeta, 2009).

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Italy and the Red Brigades

The Success of Repentance Policy in Counterterrorism

Erica Chenoweth

MANY DIFFERENT FORMS OF TERRORISM HAVE TROUBLED Italy over the past four decades. The grievances against the Italian government in the postwar period have generated political violence ranging from nationalist-separatist terrorism near the Austrian border in the South Tyrol area, to right-wing terrorism with neofascist tendencies, left-wing Marxist and anarchist terrorism, foreign terrorism emanating from the Palestinian territories and several Arab countries, and Mafioso violence that has often contained quasipolitical elements. This chapter examines one terrorist group in particular—the Red Brigades—since it represents one of the most durable and evasive terrorist groups of the 1970s and 1980s in Italy. An investigation of the history of the Red Brigades illuminates the successes and failures of the Italian government in confronting their wave of violence, providing several observations that could inform current international efforts to reduce terrorism and insurgency.

Profile of the Red Brigades: History of a Left-Wing Terrorist Group

The second half of the 1960s was a period of great social unrest in Italy. The country was home to the largest communist party in Western Europe, with a wide membership of students and workers. However, the postwar parliament had been dominated by the center-right Christian Democrat

(DC) party, with left-wing parties such as the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in virtually permanent opposition. The lack of alternation in government is the oft-cited reason why the Italian system gave rise to violent political extremism within the student movements of the period.

Origin and Early Activities: 1970–1976

Left-wing terrorism originated out of the declining social protest movements existing in Italy during the 1960s. Sidney Tarrow describes the common encounters that created the atmosphere out of which terrorism emerged:

Violence occurred most often when left-wing students encountered right-wing students in the schools or on the streets. The pattern was set up as early as April 1966. . . . Typically, a group of leftist students would occupy a school; subsequently, fascist youth groups would attack them, defending the “right to study” and bashing heads in the process. These groups would later encounter each other on the streets, disrupt each other’s public meetings, or lie in wait for one another outside their parents’ homes. Violence between competing social movements made the streets dangerous and provided a background in violence for many future terrorists.¹

The continual tit-for-tat exchange between right- and left-wing radicals soon earned the phrase “strategy of tension.” This phrase refers to the way that the extreme right and extreme left interacted, adopting a “strategy of tension” to prevent one another from obtaining too much influence in public opinion and forcing an electoral outcome. In truth, however, the neofascist groups enjoyed sympathy within the repressive bodies of the government as well as from external supporters, such as the United States, which were interested in preventing a Soviet infiltration of the Italian polity. Indeed, in 1948–1949 several neofascists within Italy had formed a secret program called “Gladio,” a NATO-supported band of paramilitary units, which was unknown even to the Italian parliament until four decades later.² Gladio was to be deployed in the event of a communist revolt within Italy, during which NATO would hypothetically support Gladio operatives in a military coup that would restore Italy to its democratic path. Such was the political atmosphere in which the leftwing terrorist groups, including the Red Brigades, would eventually take form.

However, there were more immediate events that led to the decision by leftist groups to use violence. On December 12, 1969, a bomb exploded on the Piazza Fontana in Milan, killing 14 and injuring 80 people. The

government initially assigned blame to leftist student groups, which were widespread in Milan and in other industrial cities throughout Italy. However, later revelations confirmed that the bombing was actually the work of neofascist groups who were intending to provoke a reaction within the government to resort to more repressive means vis-à-vis communists within Italy. Even more shocking was the discovery that Italian officials—particularly in law enforcement and secret services—were conspirators in the bombing, suggesting shadowy forces at work. This theme of government complicity in neofascist violence was to arise repeatedly throughout the history of the Red Brigades, often legitimating their battle in their own eyes.

The PCI, expected by its communist members to react to the Piazza Fontana incident with outrage, instead became increasingly more moderate as a response to the coalition dynamics and a need to attract new members with less extreme persuasions. While the PCI moved toward the center and the DC persisted in dominating parliament, left-wing protest groups became more radical. Mention of the Piazza Fontana bombing appeared in numerous documents of left-wing extremist groups for the next several years.³ Hostility toward both the DC and the PCI increased among left-wing groups during this time, who argued that the DC was defending right-wing terrorist groups and sponsoring repressive police tactics in quieting student demonstrations, while the PCI was useless in preventing such transgressions.⁴

The Brigate Rosse (Red Brigades, hereafter BR) arose out of this milieu, forming among discontented PCI members and radical students in 1970. The *brigatisti* (as BR members called themselves) who made the decision to use violence as a means of political expression were apparently disillusioned by the continual immobility of the parliamentary system, which was often engaged in policy gridlock due to the fragility of the ruling coalitions.⁵ Bonds of solidarity formed within networks of social and political activity appeared to influence the individual and collective decisions to resort to terrorist violence, rather than conventional political means of expression.⁶

The pronounced goal of the BR was “to provoke a fascist takeover of power in Italy that in turn would bring Italian communism back to its revolutionary stance betrayed by the historical compromise” between the PCI and the DC.⁷ In a 1971 publication entitled *Classe contro classe, guerra di classe* (“Class against Class, Class War”), the BR described their self-proclaimed purpose as: “groups of armed propaganda whose fundamental task is to gain the solidarity and support of the proletarian masses for the Communist revolution . . . to reveal the most hidden power structures

and the conniving between power groups and/or apparently separate institutions.”⁸

Terrorist activities began in 1972, as the BR grew from a small faction to a large organization with a wide external support base. Within four years, the BR consisted of more than 600 full-time terrorists operating in city columns in Milan, Rome, Naples, Genoa, and Turin, which were subdivided into “brigades” with three- to five-member “cells.”⁹ This organization into independent cells, combined with groups of people performing auxiliary operations and large groups of sympathizers within society, shaped the BR into a severe challenge to Italian society over the next 15 years.¹⁰

Initially, the BR primarily targeted managers of industrial concerns, right-wing trade unions, and right-wing interest groups.¹¹ Interestingly, however, the BR were regarded as a mere nuisance among politicians, and little notice was given to them by the elites who were occupied by the struggle to maintain the unity of coalitions in government.

By 1974, the BR decided that the group’s objective was no longer the mere “exposure” of the hidden maneuverings of power or the “punishment” of enemies of the collective movements; the terrorist organization set itself the task of attacking and destroying capitalist power itself.¹² Thus, in 1974–1975, the BR began to attack and kidnap government officials in an attempt to draw more attention to the group and its grievances.

The BR adopted a two-fold strategy in selecting its targets during this period. On one hand, the BR decided to “strike one to educate a hundred” by injuring dozens of local and regional DC officials, which reflected the desire of the BR to dislocate the state by intimidating intermediate-level political personnel. The second tactic was to adopt a more “direct confrontation” in order to eliminate the political opponents whom they considered to pose the greatest threat to the BR’s plans.¹³ During the same period, there was a subsequent escalation of violent attacks, especially in light of increased activities by right-wing terrorist groups.

In fact, an intense dynamic of competition between terrorist groups in outbidding one another for new recruits, resources, and attention drove the terrorists to escalate their activities throughout the life of the BR.¹⁴ This competition existed not only between groups on the left and right, but also between groups of similar ideologies. For instance, one of the most fearsome rivalries existed between *Prima Linea* and the BR, both of whom were left-wing terrorist groups with similar objectives. It is vital to note that regardless of ideological and strategic similarities, terrorist groups operating within democracies are likely to compete with one another for recruits, financial support, and attention. This competition creates a constant incentive to monitor, anticipate, and counteract one another’s activities,

which often leads to an escalation of propaganda and attacks—in frequency and in lethality.¹⁵

From 1970 to 1974, the Italian government underestimated the BR and the problem of terrorism in general, despite several high-profile attacks conducted by right-wing terrorist groups during this period. These attacks sometimes implicated police and secret services members, and to make matters worse, investigations into these events were often stymied by cover-ups and corruption within the justice system. Thus, while the Italian government was generally ignorant of the destructive potential of the BR, elements of the state were involved in perpetrating terrorist attacks that fueled the anger of the BR. Subsequently, the BR scaled up their activities. Only after the BR began to focus on political personnel, such as a Genoan judge, did Rome begin to focus more on countering this terrorist group. By that time, however, the BR had already developed organizational capacity and momentum.

“The Years of Lead”: 1977–1981

Members of the BR have referred to the period between 1977 and 1981 as “the years of lead.” During this time, the BR was unified, active, and growing in strength. Furthermore, during this period, the BR carried out its most high-profile attacks.¹⁶

Between 1974 and 1979, the Italian government began to steadily increase its attention to the BR and other left-wing terrorist groups. There were two police groups involved: the *Pubblica Sicurezza* (PS) and the *Armata dei Carabinieri* (CC).¹⁷ Within the secret services, two new specialized institutions developed: the General Inspectorate for Action Against Terrorism (*Ispettorato Generale per la Lotta contro i terrorismo*), and the Special Group of Judiciary Police (*Nucleo Speciale di Polizia Guardiziar*a).¹⁸ The *Ispettorato antiterrorismo* was created by the home minister in 1974 to deal with the growing problem of internal political violence. Despite its name, however, the *Ispettorato* was not exclusively concerned with terrorism.¹⁹

The joint efforts of the *Nucleo* and the *Ispettorato* resulted in the first massive police offensive against terrorist groups around 1974–1975. This offensive resulted in the demise of several left-wing terrorist groups and the arrests of BR founders Renato Curcio and Alberto Franceschini.²⁰ It appeared that the first wave of left-wing terrorism had come to an end.

After the successful raids of 1974–1975, both the *Nucleo* and the *Ispettorato* were dissolved in 1976 without explanation, and attention to terrorism subsequently decreased.²¹ But the government underestimated the

motives and capacity of the BR. In the meantime, the BR had regrouped around fugitive militants and other left-wing sympathizers. Its operational capacity restored, the BR resumed its activity, pursuing high-profile targets.

In 1977, criminal legislation demonstrated a degree of political attention to terrorism. However, this attention was more focused on a so-called general increase of criminal violence rather than on terrorism in particular.²² Moreover, the security system was “characterized by a very low level of control over security agencies by representative political bodies, such as the Parliament.”²³ What security apparatus did exist was therefore unconstrained by normal democratic checks and balances, as it was fraught with corruption and mismanagement from within.

In fact, the entire intelligence system was modified in 1977 through legislation mainly intended to ensure stable political oversight over Italian intelligence services. This reform was put in place in response to revelations of police complicity in right-wing terrorist activities and other criminal endeavors—particularly the arrest of Vito Micelli, chief of the army intelligence service since 1969 and head of the secret service from 1970–1974, who was charged with conspiracy. The secret service was dissolved and replaced by two agencies with distinct responsibilities: the Servizio Informazioni Sicurezza Militare, which was assigned to protect military security, and the Servizio Informazioni Sicurezza Democratica, which was designated to oversee internal security. These agencies united under new rules that defined responsibilities, control, and coordination.²⁴ They were also placed under the direct oversight of Italy’s interior ministry and the prime minister in 1980.²⁵

Unfortunately, however, during the installation of these reforms, the operational abilities of this intelligence system were quite weak—especially due to a lack of coordination and sharing of information. Notably, this period of weakness in intelligence coincided with the height of the BR’s terrorist activities. Certainly, the shifting of the bureaucracy contributed to vulnerabilities, which the BR exploited.

The lack of preparation and foresight experienced by the intelligence community at that time had its greatest consequence in the abduction of the president of the DC, Aldo Moro, in March 1978—an event that the intelligence system neither predicted nor prevented. The BR abducted Aldo Moro in a crowded Rome street, killing five of his bodyguards in the process. The Italian government refused to negotiate with the BR or pay a ransom on Moro’s behalf. After the lengthy and dramatic crisis in which the BR held Moro hostage for several months, the former prime minister was executed and dumped into the streets of Rome. Indeed, the Moro case

was a virtual disaster for Italian politics. It was especially disturbing that the government refused to negotiate for Moro's release, yet it conceded to the BR later for the release of another captive, *Ciro Cirillo*, in 1981. This midlevel official apparently possessed potentially damaging personal information about some high-level politicians that, if discovered, might mean ruin for their political careers. So a large ransom was paid for his release, igniting wide debate as to the neutrality of the government in waging a successful campaign against the BR and illuminating the endemic corruption within the political system.²⁶

Scholars *Gian Carlo Caselli* and *Donatella Della Porta* argue that Moro's abduction "had a double objective: to mobilize the various armed groups working in Italy, pushing them to intensify their actions and to 'raise the level of attack,' and to provoke a climate of civil war that would facilitate some form of legitimization of the underground organization by the state institutions."²⁷ However, the abduction ultimately had the opposite effect on both fronts: not only did it cause many terrorists to become introspective concerning the armed struggle, but also it induced the national government to take the terrorist threat seriously and adopt appropriate counterterrorist measures that would ultimately lead to the downfall of the BR.

Thus, as Caselli and Della Porta observe, "in the period beginning in 1979, we see a series of internal splits and divisions, with long-lasting reciprocal antagonisms that sometimes ended in death threats and in the rather pathetic invitation to adopt a sort of federalism of armed groups that was not followed up."²⁸ In addition to the internal splits, there arose tension within the groups that resulted from living underground. Despite the increase in activity, BR terrorists were growing weary of the criminal lifestyle, and this weariness produced anxiety and frustration in addition to the ideological disagreements that tormented the BR. Such conflicts resulted in the first split of the BR in 1979.

This split constituted a severe risk for the militaristic hierarchy of the BR. Indeed, the leaders of the BR responded to such insubordination by releasing a document directed at the mutinous terrorists, entitled "Beat Liquidationist Opportunism and Defeatist Ideology."²⁹ In addition to internal tensions, according to Caselli and Della Porta, "the collapse of the web of solidarity within the organization had a deleterious effect on the network of external supporters who had in the past supplied the important logistic support."³⁰ The number of attacks by the BR during this time declined, but the severity of the attacks increased. Some argue, however, that the "real motivation for many of the terrorist crimes carried out during this period can be traced to the struggle among the various factions fighting over the hegemony of the leftovers of the organization."³¹

The weakness of the state intelligence system as a result of the 1977 reorganization lasted about two years.³² However, the shift in attitude following the political kidnappings of 1978 generated several pieces of legislation that finally addressed the terrorist threat in a direct way. Stortini-Wortmann suggests that the “widening of police powers was considerable and a general shift of power from the judiciary to the police was introduced, even if for a limited time and restricted to particular crimes.”³³ Moreover, new preventive measures came into effect in 1978. First, the home minister obtained the authority to ask for copies of legal proceedings and transcripts to prevent future crimes or to assemble them into a database. Second, the same decree declared that the police could collect limited information from suspects and detainees without requiring the presence of a defending attorney.³⁴ These decrees were enacted without much political discussion, deliberation, or consensus due to their urgency.

In a more repressive response, the government created the second *Nucleo Dalla Chiesa*, which was “directed to fill the operational gap in the existing police structures and to cope with terrorist organizations by tactics used by terrorists, first of all surprise and secrecy.”³⁵ The *Nucleo* was quite efficient in its performance—it was mainly composed of CC members and had few bureaucratic constraints, since it responded directly to the home minister.³⁶ Its strength lay in its attempts to directly connect information, analysis, and operations.³⁷ Despite its immediate efficacy, however, Stortini-Wortmann argues that the *Nucleo* was quite undemocratic in its organization and methods, noting that there was little accountability or transparency concerning its tactics, and its creation was no more than “a response to citizens’ emotional need to be reassured to the active response of the state.”³⁸ This sort of response is common in crisis situations—to give a “non-elected figure large amounts of free rein and to pay little attention to the less satisfactory aspects of his approach.”³⁹ In hindsight, some may rightly condemn the participation of secret police, the use of decrees, and few restrictions on such forces as undemocratic, since they lacked the transparency and accountability usually required of democratic institutions.

The Italian state also created groups to evaluate intelligence coming in from regional units and to develop profiles of the terrorists’ ideological positions. One particularly informative practice was to compare different groups, their hierarchies, goals, tactics, and resource bases.⁴⁰ Moreover, special secret commandos—which were created between 1978 and 1979 inside both the CC and the PS—were deployed to terrorist emergencies and achieved some significant success, as with the liberation of U.S. Army General James Dozier in 1981.⁴¹ Moreover, the flow of intelligence improved beginning in 1979.

Interestingly, Della Porta finds that the state's extrajudicial or more violent repressive activities produced an *increase* in terrorist recruitment during this period until 1980.⁴² However, two vital pieces of legislation came into effect in 1980 and 1982: the *pentiti* laws. The *pentiti* policy, commonly referred to as "repentance policy," provided sentence reductions for terrorists who collaborated with police and special treatment for those who publicly denounced the use of violence to pursue political goals.⁴³ In fact, Della Porta records that before 1980, only 20 percent of terrorists had been arrested; however, 42 percent were arrested in 1980 alone, with 37.2 percent arrested in the following years.⁴⁴

As a result of numerous defections from the BR, followed by confessions and an inflow of intelligence, police were able to apprehend terrorists and thwart some potentially deadly attacks. For instance, in 1981, the BR kidnapped U.S. General Dozier. Based upon experience from the Moro abduction and the confessions of several terrorist informants, however, the police were able to mount a successful rescue effort to free Dozier from terrorist captivity. This successful event was followed by a wave of arrests at the end of 1982, which demolished the infrastructure of the BR.

In effect, the *pentiti* laws directly and indirectly hastened the disintegration of the BR, creating numerous splinter groups.⁴⁵ The terrorist groups themselves launched numerous campaigns to find and punish the *pentito*.⁴⁶ Moreover, from 1981 the number and severity of BR attacks declined and were mainly focused on Rome, with some attacks taking place in Naples.⁴⁷ Pluchinsky argues that three key elements must exist for a left-wing terrorist group to survive the arrests of its main leadership cadre: "(1) an active prison front, (2) a dedicated circle of supporters and sympathizers who will not be discouraged when top leaders are arrested, and (3) ideological unity within the group."⁴⁸ While the BR maintained a somewhat active prison membership and the potential for a large body of external sympathizers, it became engulfed in a devastating ideological debate during this period from which it never recovered.⁴⁹

Schism and Decline: 1982–1988

Especially following the *pentiti* legislation in 1980 and 1982, the BR was in crisis. Those terrorists remaining loyal to the BR were under constant threat of discovery by police, especially since informants were cooperating fully with state officials. Moreover, the legislation produced a constant suspicion between group members that undermined the effectiveness of the group. The need to go further underground only exacerbated the already-existing ideological tensions within the group. The most serious

organizational schism occurred toward the end of 1984, when the BR split into two factions: the Communist Combatant Party (BR/PCC) and the Union of Fighting Communists (BR/UCC).

The BR/PCC was the main military faction, believing that the armed struggle must be conducted by a revolutionary body. This faction rejected the importance of grassroots political action. The BR/UCC, on the other hand, was considered the “movementalist” faction of the mainline BR, maintaining that the armed struggle should include both a revolutionary vanguard and an informed proletariat that was actively engaged in the process of revolution.⁵⁰

In 1986, the Italian government passed a further *pentiti* law, which reduced the penalties for those terrorists who abandoned the armed struggle even without collaborating or informing on other terrorists. Prison laws were adopted providing concessions for imprisoned terrorists, including preparation for reentry into society, professional training, and the ability to fraternize with other former terrorists.⁵¹ These acts of good faith not only removed the incentives for weary terrorists to continue clandestine activity within the terrorist group, but also began to restore faith in the democratic system among some former militants.⁵²

Among those *brigatisti* still active in the armed struggle, evidence of their decline was discovered in June 1988 during a police raid. Police found notes from a series of secret meetings in January 1988 between the BR/PCC and the Red Armee Faktion (RAF), a German left-wing terrorist group.⁵³ Strangely, the terrorists had maintained full transcripts of the meetings. It was clear that the BR and the RAF had attempted to find some common ideological ground in order to unify forces. However, they could not firmly overcome disagreements about strategy and ideology, and therefore were unable to avail themselves of organizational or tactical assistance.⁵⁴

This last-gasp attempt to incorporate the assistance of a foreign terrorist group is indicative of the struggle for survival experienced by the BR at this time. Information gained as a result of interrogations of defectors led to several key raids that resulted in the arrest of the remaining active militants. Indeed, the end of the BR was soon to come—police raided several BR hideouts in mid-1988, and the group was effectively destroyed at that time.

All told, the Red Brigades were responsible for approximately 400 deaths, 5,000 injuries, and 12,500 attacks on property over the course of their 18-year existence.⁵⁵ Like many terrorist groups, however, the BR could withstand neither the internal challenges of ideological and organizational disunity, nor the external pressures of a dwindling support base and a well-timed government response. In the long term, several groups

have “reincarnated” the tradition of the BR—including the BR/PCC, although it is sporadic in its operations and represents a lesser threat to Italian politics and society.

The Government Response: Successes and Failures

As noted previously, the Italian government pursued a response to terrorism in several important phases. In the first phase, which occurred from 1970 to 1974, the government was fairly negligent of the Red Brigades’ activity. In the second phase, from 1974 to 1979, the government took greater notice of terrorism, endorsing the creation of several special units devoted to undermining terrorist activities despite enduring bureaucratic problems within the state apparatus. And finally, from 1980 to 1988, successful counterterrorist measures enacted by the government led to the demise of the Red Brigades. An assessment of the various tactics adopted to combat terrorism, especially identifying failures and successes, offers useful lessons for responding to the challenges of contemporary terrorist threats.

First, there were two obvious failures of the Italian government in dealing with terrorism: its negligence of the left-wing terrorist groups, and its failure to purge the government of neofascists who sympathized with the right-wing terrorists. The Italian government was very slow to respond effectively to the terrorist crises of the 1970s and 1980s. It is difficult to discern whether this was more a function of the policy gridlock and sensitivity to coalition dynamics, or whether it was more indicative of sympathy with the neofascist groups; it was most likely a function of both, to varying degrees within different levels of the bureaucracy. However, what is clear is that conspirators within the government were quite a hindrance to pursuing justice vis-à-vis the right-wing groups, which in turn fueled the grievances on the left. Moreover, the lack of a unified effort against the left further reduced the government’s efficacy in responding to and anticipating the violence that the BR would inflict.

Second, a fairly standard response by the government was the adoption of specialized antiterrorist units, such as the Nucleo Dalla Chiesa and the Ispettorato. While these units certainly coordinated the counterterrorism effort within Italy and gave the public a sense of safety, they lacked sufficient oversight necessary for a democratic system. In effect, police raids were often accompanied by broad sweeps of nonviolent left-wing groups that failed to discriminate between suspects and ordinary activists.⁵⁶ Not only did this state behavior raise ethical concerns, but also ultimately aided in the recruitment of terrorists due to a desire for retaliation among angered individuals.

The final failure of the Italian government in pursuing a proper counterterrorist response was its inattention to the competitive dynamics between existing terrorist groups. The state was either unaware of, or unable to confront, the constant tit-for-tat attacks that occurred as a result of competition between terrorist groups on both the right and the left. Indeed, few governments have ever found a way to defuse such competition. The Italians may have come closest, in fact, by changing the rules of the game through the adoption of *pentiti* legislation.

Notably, from 1980 to 1988, the Italian government put into place the *pentiti* reforms, which effectively destroyed the already struggling BR. The adoption of *pentiti* legislation provides a model for other governments. It is likely that *pentiti* was successful because the BR was experiencing a period of internal struggle—a condition that may be a prerequisite for the success of such policies in other contexts. Terrorist groups are most vulnerable to internal struggles when they have been underground for an extended period, when there are ideological divisions within the group concerning strategy and tactics, or when there are incentives offered to terrorists for exit from the group, such as decreased sentences in exchange for information.⁵⁷ It was particularly important that the Catholic Church provided a venue by which such repentant BR members were able to reenter society following their defections. This experience suggests that non-governmental organizations can be helpful in aiding the implementation of counterterrorist policies.⁵⁸

In sum, there are several failures and successes to learn from this Italian counterterrorism experience. Initially, Italian counterterrorism failed because of shadowy complicity between elements of the state and right-wing terrorism; refusal of the government to acknowledge the destructive potential of the BR; knee-jerk reactions resulting in undemocratic policies, which raised ethical concerns; and a failure to appreciate the escalatory effects of intergroup rivalries among terrorist groups. However, the successes of Italian counterterrorism included a unification of intelligence units and a coordination of their activities; creation of special commando forces with training in hostage crises; and, finally, the introduction of *pentiti* policies that exploited internal divisions within the BR and led to the defection of many members.

Conclusion

As with any other liberal democracy, Italy struggled with the balance between freedom and security—the Nucleo units and the Ispettorato pushed the boundaries of democracy in terms of method and operation.

However, Italy ultimately found a strong and effective counterterrorist response that destroyed the BR terrorist group while preserving civil liberties and respect for human rights. This balance was struck as Italy pursued a vigorous criminal justice approach, arresting and trying BR members, while providing incentives for militants to surrender their arms and join the fight against their former comrades. Persistent internal troubles within the BR, an attempt to reform the intelligence system to purge it of its neo-fascist conspirators, the proper coordination of police action, and the introduction of *pentiti* laws all combined to end the threat of the BR once and for all.

Notes

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4. Jan Oskar Engene, *Terrorism in Western Europe: Explaining the Trends since 1950* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2004), 138–39.

5. For a description, see Mack Smith, *Modern Italy*, 443–66.

6. Raimondo Catanzaro, ed., *The Red Brigades and Left Wing Terrorism in Italy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 5; Caselli and Della Porta, "The History of the Red Brigades," 74.

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8. Caselli and Della Porta, "The History of the Red Brigades," 75.

9. Yonah Alexander and Dennis Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1992) 194.

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11. Caselli and Della Porta, "The History of the Red Brigades," 76.

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13. *Ibid.*, 91.

14. Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989); see also Erica Chenoweth, "Democratic Competition and Terrorist Activity," *Journal of Politics* 72, no. 1 (January 2010): 16–30.

15. See Chenoweth, "Democratic Competition and Terrorist Activity"; see also Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) for a discussion of these dynamics in Palestinian, Sri Lankan, Chechen, and Turkish groups.

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17. Luciana Stortoni-Wortmann, "The Political Response to Terrorism in Italy from 1969 to 1983," in *European Democracies against Terrorism: Governmental Policies and Intergovernmental Cooperation*, ed. Fernando Reinares (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 153.

18. Donatella Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy," in *Terrorism in Context*, ed. Martha Crenshaw (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 114.

19. Stortini-Wortmann, "The Political Response to Terrorism in Italy," 157.

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21. Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy," 117.

22. Stortini-Wortmann, "The Political Response to Terrorism in Italy," 153.

23. *Ibid.*, 155.

24. *Ibid.*, 157.

25. Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy," 117.

26. Mack Smith, *Modern Italy*, 467.

27. Caselli and Della Porta, "The History of the Red Brigades," 91.

28. *Ibid.*, 97.

29. *Ibid.*, 98.

30. *Ibid.*, 99.

31. *Ibid.*, 102.

32. Stortini-Wortmann, "The Political Response to Terrorism in Italy," 148.

33. *Ibid.*, 153.

34. *Ibid.*

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39. Paul Furlong, "Political Terrorism in Italy: Responses, Reaction, and Immobilism," in *Terrorism, a Challenge to the State*, ed. Juliet Lodge (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1981), 61–62. Excerpted in David J. Whittaker, *The Terrorism Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 228.

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41. *Ibid.*, 160.

42. Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy," 118.

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45. *Ibid.*, 119.

46. Caselli and Della Porta, "The History of the Red Brigades," 102.

47. *Ibid.*, 104.

48. Pluchinsky, "Western Europe's Red Terrorists," 42.

49. Ibid.

50. Alexander and Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists*, 194.

51. Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy," 154.

52. Ibid.

53. For more on this group, please see the chapter by Joanne Wright in this volume.

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57. Martha Crenshaw, Paul Wilkinson, Jon B. Alterman, and Teresita Schaffer, "How Terrorism Ends," *United States Institute for Peace Special Report* (Washington, DC: USIP, 1997); see also Della Porta, "Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy."

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Countering West Germany's Red Army Faction

What Can We Learn?

Joanne Wright

ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1977, THE Red Army Faction (RAF) kidnapped Hans Martin Schleyer, president of the Employers' Association of the Federal Republic of Germany. In exchange for his safe return, the kidnappers demanded the release of several of their members being held in Stammheim prison, including founding members Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Jan-Carl Rapse, and Irmgard Möller. For over a month the West German security services searched in vain for Schleyer and the kidnappers continued to demand the release of their imprisoned comrades.

On October 13, 1977, two men and two women hijacked Lufthansa Flight 181 headed from Palma de Mallorca to Frankfurt with 86 passengers and five crew members on board. The hijacked plane first landed in Rome where the hijackers made it clear that their demands also included the release of the same RAF prisoners being demanded by the kidnappers of Schleyer. Despite pleas from the West German government that the hijacked plane should not be allowed to leave, the Italian authorities chose to ensure that any ensuing drama would not be played out on Italian soil, and they refueled the plane and allowed it to leave. After a brief stop at Larnaca in Cyprus the hijacked plane flew on to Dubai. Two things of note

happened while the plane was in Dubai. The first was the arrival of a contingent of the elite West German counterterrorist unit, GSG9. Unfortunately, the Dubai authorities refused to countenance any GSG9 storming of the plane, but they did offer to use their own British-trained forces. The second was that the Dubai authorities revealed in a radio interview that the captain of the hijacked plane, Jürgen Schumann, had been passing on details about the hijackers. This was overheard by the hijackers and they forced Captain Schumann to put the plane back in the air.

The plane then landed in Aden, where the hijackers shot Captain Schumann dead in front of the passengers and crew. By October 17, the hijacked plane (flown by the copilot) had relocated to Mogadishu, Somalia. At this point, the West German government told the hijackers that the prisoners in Stammheim would be flown to Mogadishu. However, this was only to give GSG9 time to position itself for an attempt to storm the plane. Under the cover of darkness, members of GSG9 successfully stormed the plane, recovering all the hostages and shooting dead three of the four hijackers.

Before news of this successful rescue operation could be digested by the West German government and people, the authorities at Stammheim announced that they had found the bodies of Baader and Ensslin, the mortally wounded body of Raspe and seriously injured body of Möller in their cells. It emerged that Baader and Raspe had shot themselves, Ensslin had hung herself, and Möller had stabbed herself repeatedly in the chest. The following day, October 19, the RAF revealed that it had murdered the kidnapped Hans Martin Schleyer.

So ended 44 days that have entered 20th-century terrorist fact and fiction. The murder of Schleyer also symbolized the end of the “first generation” of the RAF. The organization continued with a “second generation” in the early and mid-1980s, and it attempted to capitalize on widespread anti-United States and anti-NATO sentiment surrounding the deployment of short- and intermediate-range nuclear weapons. However, this second generation, although it was responsible for a number of high-profile attacks, failed to attract the same degree of support or concern as the original Baader-Meinhof Gang.¹ The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the subsequent confirmation of links between the RAF and the East German secret police pushed the organization even further to the margins of relevance and acceptability.

In April 1998, the RAF announced that it had formally disbanded, having carried out its last active operation in 1993 when it bombed a prison. Since then it has essentially disappeared from the 21st-century lexicology of terrorism and threat analysis. Yet the RAF, its motivating ideology, and

particularly the West German government's counterterrorism policies can provide valuable lessons and insights into 21st-century terrorism. It can show, for example, how a relatively small and seemingly irrational group² can create a physical and psychological impact way out of proportion to size and threat. Perhaps even more usefully it can illustrate that whatever sympathy terrorist groups do manage to generate among national and international audiences is largely derived from government responses to terrorism. In the case of West Germany, these responses can be grouped into three categories: security force behavior, prisoners and prison conditions, and legislative changes. All of these responses remain as critical today as they were in West Germany during the 1970s.

Historical Background and Ideology

All terrorist groups emerge from distinctive historical contexts and ideological analyses. In the case of West Germany's RAF there are a number of interwoven themes to be considered. Firstly and perhaps most obviously, there was the legacy of the Nazi era and the process of de-Nazification. Added to this was the development of an essentially capitalist economy and the acceptance of this by the mainstream political left in West Germany—the Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, or SPD). This, in turn, alienated those on the more extreme left, who began to organize what was known as the Extra Parliamentary Opposition (Außerparlamentarische Opposition, or APO). The APO both influenced and was influenced by radical theorizing in West Germany's universities and the Cold War international environment. All this combined to produce an RAF ideology that glorified action over intellect and defined students as the key revolutionary actors.

In the days and months immediately after the defeat of Nazi Germany there was much soul searching about what characteristics had produced Nazism and how they could be avoided in the new German state. One analysis that was prominent among many was that a combination of selfish materialism and aggressive nationalism had played major roles in the development of the Nazi state. However, before any real German notions of the new state could be consolidated, the reality of economic chaos and Cold War tensions predominated. This led the center-right of Germany's political spectrum, the Christian Democratic Union (Christlich Demokratische Union, or CDU), to embrace both a market-driven economy and strong foreign policy alignment with the United States and NATO (including rearmament in 1955) as the main characteristics of the new West German state.

Initially, the SPD opposed both a market-driven economy and a clear foreign policy alignment, but after poor federal election results it undertook an assessment of its socialist economic policies and its support for a united, neutral Germany. In 1959, it formally shifted its platform to embrace a social market economy and West Germany's integration into both NATO and the developing European Economic Community. In electoral terms, this was a success for the SPD, and in 1966 it entered a governing coalition with the CDU. However, it left those to its left on the political spectrum disillusioned and increasingly isolated from the political process. With the CDU and SPD together controlling more than 90 percent of the seats in the parliament, the radicals turned their attention to the APO.

The APO movement was very much associated with radical theorizing that had begun in several West German universities in the mid- and late 1950s, especially Frankfurt and Berlin. Students in West Germany, and indeed elsewhere in the industrialized world, came to see themselves as in possession of a superior moral theory, and felt justified in taking direct action against an unresponsive and morally corrupt parliamentary system. What was peculiar about the West German situation was the positions of influence that were occupied by ex-Nazis.

Events in the international arena also played a part in motivating the APO. Students identified with the various national liberation struggles being played out in Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Their heroes were people like Mao, Che Guevara, and Frantz Fanon. They were critical of the evolution and conduct of the Cold War and especially U.S. policy in Vietnam. When the Shah of Iran visited Berlin in 1967, there was open confrontation, and a young student was shot dead by the police. This prompted the West German authorities to introduce much-needed reform into the archaic and overcrowded university system, which served to dissipate much of the student anger. But it also served to alienate the radicals even further, and it was at this point that the RAF emerged.³

The RAF's ideology was eclectic and largely secondhand, and it is certainly much easier to identify what it opposed than what it advocated. Broadly speaking, the RAF saw itself as part of a global communist struggle against capitalism and imperialism. Thus, it is not surprising that its ideology contains elements of Marxism and Leninism. It also contains elements from the thinking of many of the post-1945 guerrilla war theorists such as Mao, Guevara, and Marighella. The critical analyses of parliamentary democracy by thinkers such as Marcuse and Sartre were also (mis)used by the RAF to provide ideological justifications for their attack on the West German state and its representatives.

While RAF ideology generally accepted Marxist views on the ills of capitalism and that terrorism could ultimately be part of the revolution, it did not accept Marx's strong views that there were objective conditions that needed to be met before a proletariat revolution could be successful. Another person who could not accept that capitalism would inevitably produce a politically conscious working class that would rise to overthrow capitalism was Lenin. Rather than wait for these objective conditions to be created by crises in capitalism, Lenin believed that these conditions could be hastened by the actions of a politically enlightened vanguard. The RAF certainly saw itself as such a vanguard, but much else of Lenin's analysis—while it may have had some relevance to early 20th-century nonindustrialized Russia—had little to do with mid-20th-century industrialized West Germany.

While the conditions in agrarian China were also a marked contrast to 1960s West Germany, Mao's theory of guerrilla warfare is also something to note in the development of the RAF's ideology. Mao, in adapting Marxism-Leninism to suit the conditions of China, introduced an element of "voluntarism" into the revolutionary process. This idea of "voluntarism" was taken much further by Che Guevara in his thinking and actions in Cuba and various other parts of South America. And Che Guevara was an immense influence not only on the RAF but also on a whole generation of radicals throughout the industrialized world.

There were two modifications that Guevara made to Marxism-Leninism that were to influence the RAF and other European terrorist groups that emerged in the late 1960s, such as Action Direct in France or the Red Brigades in Italy. The first was his analysis of how the revolution could be brought about. Guevara argued that the Cuban revolution proved not only that popular forces can win a war against a repressive regime, but also that it refuted those who feel the need to wait until, in some perfect way all the required objective and subjective conditions are at hand, instead of hastening to bring these conditions about by their own efforts.⁴

Second, Guevara took Lenin's notion of a revolutionary vanguard and applied it to active guerrillas rather than a political elite:

The essence of guerrilla warfare is the miracle by which a small nucleus of men—looking beyond their immediate tactical objective—becomes the vanguard of a mass movement, achieving its ideals, establishing a new society, ending the ways of the old, and winning social justice.⁵

Although these aspects of Guevara's thoughts appealed to the RAF, there were other elements of his thinking that were less attractive. Guevara,

although he recognized a role for urban environments, stressed that his ideas were only applicable to rural environments that were replete with “land-hunger.” He also stressed that the people need to see clearly “the futility of maintaining a fight for social goals within the framework of civil debate.”⁶

So the RAF needed to recontextualize Guevara in a way that gave primacy to an urban environment and stressed the futility of parliamentary democracy. As regards the former, the RAF was helped by the Brazilian theorist Carlos Marighella, who developed a strategy of urban guerrilla warfare based around “firing groups.”⁷ As regards the latter, the RAF was helped by the radical theorists of the 1960s “New Left” movement and APO, as described above. While the contexts and motivations are very different, there are some striking similarities in the ideological justifications offered in support of violence by the RAF and by more modern groups such as Al Qaeda.

One of the key figures of the New Left Movement of the 1960s was Herbert Marcuse. While his own views on violence were ambivalent and he did condemn RAF terrorism, his analysis of parliamentary democracy, the special position he gave students, the links he made between repression in the industrialized and nonindustrialized worlds, and the privileging of action over intellect were clearly picked up by the RAF. Marcuse’s characterization of liberal democracies as repressive was based on his view that the capitalist mode of production had so subsumed the proletariat (and others) that the revolution could not be achieved through its mass action. As Marcuse explains:

the basic idea is: how can slaves who do not even know they are slaves free themselves? How can they liberate themselves by their own power, by their own faculties? They must be taught and they must be led to be free, and this is the more so the more the society in which they live uses all available means in order to shape their consciousness and to make it immune against possible alternatives. This idea of an educational, preparatory dictatorship has today become an integral element of revolution and of the justification of the revolutionary oppression.⁸

Because they are not fully integrated into the capitalist mode of production, students are able to take on this educational function and develop and lead the revolutionary consciousness. In an interview published in the *New York Times Magazine*, Marcuse says of students that they are “militant minorities who can articulate the needs and aspirations of the silent masses . . . the students can truly be called spokesmen [sic].”⁹ This was certainly taken up by the RAF’s principal ideologues Ulrike Meinhof and

Horst Mahler. Mahler, for example, claimed "it is not the organization of the industrial working class, but the revolutionary sections of the student body that are today the bearers of the contemporary conscience."¹⁰

Marcuse's concept of revolution was not limited to industrialized societies. He argued that capitalism had global effects and that a successful revolution required an alliance between forces within industrial societies and forces in the Third World. Marcuse saw these two forces as being interdependent, neither being able to succeed without the other.¹¹ This idea of fighting the same battle as revolutionaries in the Third World is very prominent in RAF ideology and propaganda. In a letter to the Labor Party of the Peoples' Republic of North Korea, Ulrike Meinhof claimed:

We think the organization of armed operations in the big cities of the Federal Republic is the right way to support the liberations movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the correct contribution of West German and West Berlin communists to the strategy of the international socialist movement in splitting the powers of imperialism by attacking them from all sides, and striking once they are split.¹²

Marcuse also helped the RAF provide ideological justifications for taking violent action by defining the revolutionary avant-garde—the students—as both an objective and subjective element in the revolutionary process. It was part of the function of the avant-garde to raise the revolutionary consciousness of those oppressed by capitalism who are unable to see their oppressed or repressed situations. Therefore, according to Horst Mahler, it "would be wrong to engage in armed struggle only when the 'consent of the masses' is assured, for this would mean to . . . renounce this struggle altogether."¹³ Mahler goes on to claim that when the RAF throw bombs "aimed at the apparatus of oppression" it is also aiming at the "consciousness of the masses."¹⁴

Marcuse did not, however, condone the view that violence was itself positive. A positive view of violence was provided by another famous New Left Philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre. Sartre's vision of society was undoubtedly a bleak one, where people competed with each other for scarce resources in a system underpinned with terror. By according violence a positive role, a new system could be created. This positive view of violence is best seen in Sartre's preface to Frantz Fanon's widely read text, *The Wretched of the Earth*.¹⁵ In it he says "[t]he rebel's weapon is proof of his humanity. For in the first days of the revolt you must kill: to shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone, to destroy an oppressor and

the man he oppresses at the same time.” In this way society can recover because violence “like the Achilles’ lance can heal the wounds that it has inflicted.”¹⁶ Mahler echoes this when he argues that to overcome the habits of obedience that the bourgeois order has instilled in the oppressed of West Germany, “*repeated violation of norms in deeds is required.*”¹⁷

While the secular ideology of the extreme left in the late 1960s and 1970s might seem diametrically opposed to the claimed theological ideology of those terrorist groups most prominent 30 years later, there are quite striking similarities that might suggest that the “newness” of today’s terrorism is somewhat overstated. For example, it is noteworthy that many of the suicide bombers that have been associated with Al Qaeda have been students—marginalized in both home countries and those in which they study.¹⁸ There is no doubt that Al Qaeda sees itself as part of a global struggle against the non-Muslim world and that it is the vanguard of this struggle.¹⁹ Finally, Al Qaeda has justified its violence as both right in itself and in terms of raising the consciousness of others.²⁰

According to the RAF, one further function of its violence was to force the West German state to reveal openly its repressiveness and fascism. Indeed, RAF claimed some success in this. By 1975, it was declaring that “many changed their attitudes towards this state because of the measure of the government against us.”²¹ Given that forcing governments to react in ways that will increase its support is also a stated aim of Al Qaeda,²² is there anything that can be learned from the West German government’s attempts to counter the RAF?

Security Force Behavior

The security services—civilian and military, overt and covert—are a major part of any government’s counterterrorism strategy, and thus it is critical that they are utilized in a proper and efficient manner. It is also true that attacking the security services is a major part of most terrorist groups’ strategy, either directly or indirectly. Terrorist groups generally aim to invoke in governments and citizens some sense of crisis. The government’s response to this crisis is then presented as evidence of an increasingly repressive and aggressive state. If this is even to a degree successful, terrorists can present their violence as defensive and transfer all guilt to the state. The RAF certainly had some degree of success in doing this.

Members of the security services were undoubtedly physical targets of the RAF. The rationale for this, according to Mahler, was to make it increasingly difficult for the state to recruit new members of the security forces, thereby applying further pressure on the state and hastening its downfall.

As he explained “those who see a cushy job in being a policeman or a soldier will increasingly understand the risk which this profession entails under the changed circumstances” making it difficult for the state to “find the tens of thousands of heroes ready to fight under such anxiety.”²³ It would, however, be difficult to claim that the RAF’s violent actions had any impact on recruitment to the West German security services. Where it did have more success was in a more indirect strategy of attacking the credibility of the security forces. Attacking the credibility of the security services is most commonly done by accusing them of adopting “shoot-to-kill” policies and other illegal behavior. (Accusing them of torturing prisoners is another key area that will be dealt with later in this chapter.)

The student demonstrations that began in the late 1960s resulted in the first time that the West German police had to confront unrest on the streets. Between 1967 and 1971, the police had shot dead two demonstrators and injured several more in what were heavy-handed and clumsy responses. After the death of the first student in 1967, RAF founder Gudrun Ensslin is reported to have claimed that the “fascist state means to kill us all. We must organize resistance. Violence is the only way to answer violence.”²⁴ In mid-1971, the respected Allensbacher Institute of Public Opinion conducted a survey that suggested that one in four young West Germans admitted “a certain sympathy” with the RAF. According to one study of these events, the actions of the police in countering student demonstrations and in searching for perceived radicals only drove people “further towards” the RAF.²⁵

A further strand of this sort of ideological success was to accuse the state’s security services of engaging in all sorts of illegal behavior. In the RAF’s case, much of this was centered on the treatment of RAF prisoners and their lawyers that will be discussed below. But another illuminating example in the case of the RAF concerned Peter Urbach. Urbach worked for the West German intelligence agencies and penetrated the increasingly radical student movement. This also put him on the fringes of the RAF and in 1971 he was called to give evidence at a trial of RAF members. However, it was announced to the press that Urbach’s evidence would be limited, and this caused speculation as to the reason. According to the RAF this was because he might have been obliged to shed light on state involvement in the bombing of a Jewish synagogue in 1969.²⁶ Such cases, even if they are completely untrue, do allow for speculation, and have played an important part in creating a reservoir of tolerance (if not sympathy) for many terrorists among people like Otto Schily, who was a lawyer representing some RAF prisoners and who ultimately became the German foreign minister.

Prisoners and Prison Conditions

The trial and imprisoning of terrorists presents a number of challenges for governments, and many governments have had to adapt both their judicial and penal systems to cope with terrorism. For example, the British government had to introduce special nonjury courts in response to threats to potential jurors and witnesses from terrorist organizations, and both the British and West German governments built special-purpose terrorist prisons to house convicted and suspected terrorists. For terrorist organizations too, prisoners are important, as can be gauged from the large numbers of operations and resources terrorist groups often devote toward freeing their comrades in custody. For example, in West Germany in 1975, members of RAF-affiliate group 2 June Movement kidnapped a Berlin politician and succeeded in exchanging him for five of their imprisoned colleagues. The fact that the West German government agreed to release the terrorists undoubtedly inspired members of the RAF to seize the West German Embassy in Stockholm just two months later demanding the release of Baader, Meinhof, Ensslin, and Raspe. When the West German government refused this demand, two embassy personnel were shot dead by the assailants. However, before any further negotiations could take place, the terrorists accidentally set off their own explosives, thus bringing the siege to an end. But it is likely that this “premature end” of the siege encouraged the RAF to try again, leading to the kidnapping of Hanns Martin Schleyer and the subsequent events of the “German autumn” described at the beginning of this chapter.

While governments around the world have become more united in their refusal to release terrorist prisoners in response to kidnappings or seizures, this has to be recognized as a continuing possibility, although perhaps an unlikely one. Where the RAF had more success—and caused the West German government some acute international embarrassment—was in focusing attention on the government’s treatment of imprisoned RAF members. This can be seen in two related areas: first, the RAF’s campaign to have the conditions they were held under defined as torture; and second, the various hunger strikes they engaged in to support this campaign.

Complaints by the RAF about the conditions under which they were held centered on the practice of keeping the prisoners in total isolation from each other and from other non-RAF prisoners. Undoubtedly, these conditions were very harsh, and one of the first—and indeed best known—attempts to bring this to both West German and international public attention involved a visit to Stammheim prison by the French philosopher Jean

Paul Sartre. Sartre described the conditions of custody as “torture”—the white painted cells, with no natural light and no other sound than the sound of the warders’ footsteps, he claimed, was likely to cause “psychological disturbances.”²⁷ This was a claim supported by the RAF’s lawyers, even the state-appointed ones, who argued that the health of the prisoners had been detrimentally affected by the years in isolation. Amnesty International also stated its belief that these sorts of custody conditions were likely to lead to physical and mental disorders.²⁸

The prison conditions also led to the creation of several support groups both within West Germany and elsewhere. Within West Germany, two such groups were formed under the names Red Aid and the Committee Against Torture. The function of these groups was to prepare publicity statements for the press, organize demonstrations in support of the prisoners, and meet the requests of the prisoners themselves for books and information. Demonstrations in support of the prisoners took place frequently in West Germany, such as in March 1981 when police had to evict protestors from the canteen of a leading German newspaper, *Der Spiegel*, in Hamburg. In the Netherlands, a Dutch support group seized Amnesty International offices in 1978 and demanded better treatment for RAF prisoners in Dutch prisons, and the following year, also in Amsterdam, another group attempted to take over the offices of the Swiss national airline demanding better treatment for RAF prisoners in Swiss prisons. The West German authorities did ease the conditions of custody in response to these protests, but they found the protests even more difficult to deal with when they were accompanied by hunger strikes.

The hunger strike is a tactic that has been used with varying degrees of success by several terrorist groups’ prisoners, perhaps most notably by the Irish Republican Army. The hunger strike can be a particularly effective weapon for terrorist groups as the state can be presented as barbaric if it lets the prisoner die and barbaric if it intervenes to force feed. The RAF engaged in a series of hunger strikes that were to result in the deaths of two people, Holger Meins in November 1974, and Sigurd Debus in April 1981. The death of prisoners on hunger strike had an effect on members of the RAF still at liberty. After the death of Meins, for example, RAF member Hans Joachim Klein reported that the death had acted like “a trigger: I had to put an end to the impotence of legality. . . . For a while I kept the horrendous photograph of Holger’s autopsy with me, so as not to dull the edge of my hatred.”²⁹ But it is possibly the effect on wider national and international audiences that is of more import.

The West German authorities did initially force feed RAF prisoners on hunger strike. This led to two of their lawyers, Otto Schilly and Klaus

Criossant, bringing charges against the doctors responsible, accusing them of mistreatment and torture. The West German authorities, who had tried to create a criminal justice system free from the baggage of the past, especially the Nazi past, were thus unable to escape the accusation that their system endorsed torture. Another criticism that the West German state was unable to escape was that it had introduced legislation that was at odds with its image as a modern liberal democratic state. These changes to legislation also helped generate sympathy for the RAF.

Legislative Changes

The terrorist threat presents all governments with challenges to their legislative and judicial systems. The need for security services to have power relating to surveillance, intelligence collection, data storage, and data access can conflict with cherished notions of civil liberties and individual rights to privacy. Putting suspected terrorists on trial also presents difficult and challenging problems for the authorities. Witnesses and judges are particularly subject to intimidation and physical attack, and it is a common terrorist tactic not to recognize the jurisdiction of the court or cooperate with its proceedings. The need to gather information, especially in times of emergency, can put immense stress on the rights of prisoners, including those on remand—as well as on the relationship between prisoners and their lawyers. All these issues can be seen in the West German government's response to terrorism, but perhaps the most difficult and controversial was the relationship between RAF members and their lawyers. There is clear evidence that the RAF used lawyers both to communicate and to circumvent prison security systems. For example, it is most likely that the guns used in the Stammheim suicides were smuggled in via lawyers, and ultimately around 30 lawyers were arrested for assisting the RAF.

In general terms, the most controversial of the West German government's legislative responses to the RAF was the Radicals Edict, which was introduced in January 1972 at the height of the hunt for the RAF's leaders. The purpose of this edict was to ban from public employment or tenured status people whose loyalty to the constitution was in question. In the first four years of its existence, nearly half a million people were subjected to the screening processes of the Radicals Edict, even though their actual behavior might have been quite legal. Another problem was that potential terrorist connections were not the only criteria used; people were screened for what might be more generally termed "political reliability."³⁰ The Radicals Edict, popularly known as the "jobs ban," was extremely unpopular in

West Germany and attracted international criticism as well. It was certainly used by the RAF to try and attach credibility to its claims of a repressive state, and it did help arouse some degree of sympathy for the group.

In terms of the criminal code, the West German government introduced two changes that became effective in January 1975 and were aimed at defending lawyers. The first defined conditions under which a lawyer could be excluded from the defense. These included:

- Suspicion that the defending lawyer may abuse contacts with defendants in prison for the purpose of putting the security of an institution in jeopardy;
- Suspicion that the defense lawyer is likely to abuse the privileges of personal contact with defendants; and
- Suspicion of personal involvement by the defending lawyer in the commission of crime, or benefiting from the proceeds of crime, or frustrating the apprehension, processing, and disposition of the perpetrators of crime.

The second law prohibited lawyers from representing more than one defendant and limited the number of counsel available to the defendant to three.

At the end of September 1975, in response to hunger strikes and refusals by RAF members to cooperate with trial proceedings, the West German government introduced a further legislative amendment to allow trials to continue in the absence of the defendant if that absence is self-inflicted. This measure also attracted a lot of national and international criticism. As Fetscher pointed out, these “in absentia trials break with a legal tradition that, with the exception of the Nazi era, has been followed in Germany since 1877.”³¹

But as mentioned earlier, the most controversial measure was the Contact Ban introduced in 1977 as a direct response to the Schleyer kidnapping. As soon as the kidnappers' demands became known, RAF prisoners were subject to a contact ban that not only prevented them from having any contact with each other, but also prevented contact between them and their lawyers. Preventing contact between prisoners and their lawyers was a serious and unconstitutional act, and several of the defending lawyers appealed to the Constitutional Court for a ruling. However, before the court could give its ruling, the West German government introduced legislation to create a legal basis for the ban.

This package of measures, and especially the contact ban, was widely criticized by the West German legal community and outside observers. For example, the *London Times* claimed in 1978 that the lawyers who were put on trial in West Germany accused of assisting the RAF most were

doing no more than “the normal fulfilling of a defense lawyer’s duties.” The same article reported worldwide legal concern because:

the political pressure for a conviction is now considerable, and what better way is there to intimidate other lawyers, and crush opposition. . . . The mass of ordinary German lawyers is ashamed by what is happening. But they are also frightened. To practice in Germany, every law student must do a period of training in a public office; if at the end of it his attitude is deemed unsuitable for defending the constitution, he will be kept from office.³²

The combination of prison conditions and these changes to the criminal code certainly provoked a number of accounts more sympathetic to the RAF than they might otherwise have been. The deaths of Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe in Stammheim led many people to question how they had been treated by the state and how this treatment measured up to West Germany’s claims to be a model, modern liberal democratic state, even if this did not translate into overall support for the RAF’s violence or its vague ideological aim of world communist revolution. The deaths and behavior of the West German government also helped produce the second generation of RAF, who continued to mount terrorist attacks well into the 1980s—although this campaign focused more on anti-NATO targets than the “repressive” West German state.

Of course, it is impossible to say that if the West German government had reacted any differently, the path and ultimate withering of the RAF would have been any different. It is also important to remember that the RAF was always a very small group whose ideology and violence was rejected by the overwhelming majority of West German citizens. In this sense, it is most definitely a “failed” terrorist organization. But are there any lessons that governments today can learn as they face the threat posed by Al Qaeda and others?

Conclusions

While the success (or otherwise) of terrorist groups is ultimately linked to their ideology and operating environment, government responses also play a key role in determining tactical successes and giving some credibility to terrorist propaganda. This chapter has suggested that the RAF was able to generate some degree of success and attach some degree of credibility to its analysis of a repressive state (although not its objective of some vaguely defined communist new world order) in three areas: security force behavior, prisoners and prison conditions, and legislative changes. Heavy-handed

police reaction to student demonstrations in the late 1960s was one of the key triggers in provoking the emergence of the RAF. Its members argued, with some degree of credibility, that their actions were defensive. Accusations of illegal security force behavior—such as the use of agents provocateurs or the illegal taping of conversations between prisoners and between prisoners and their lawyers in Stammheim—were also used to give credibility to the argument of an aggressive and oppressive security force behavior. Prison conditions were another at least partially successful propaganda theme for the RAF, as members accused the state of torture and illegality. The legislative changes introduced by the West German government were also used by the RAF to add evidence to its thesis of a dangerous state intent on subverting the constitution in order to protect its repressive powers.

It may well be true, as some have argued, that the terrorist threat faced by governments today is qualitatively and quantitatively different from terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s. But what should also be noted is that security force actions, prisons, and legislative changes remain at the center of government responses. Security force actions against terrorists and their bases since the start of the 21st century have included much more conventional military efforts, particularly with the military services of (predominantly, but not exclusively) the United States attempting to deal with terrorist organizations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some of these actions—including rendition, the use of drones for targeted killings, and various techniques of surveillance and interrogation—have recently become the focus of widespread public debate.³³ Meanwhile, the need for security forces to deal with street demonstrations, such as the recent protests in Europe against the publication of cartoons in a Danish magazine, have also provided propaganda opportunities.

Prisoners and prison conditions are another area where both the U.S. and British governments in particular are very vulnerable. There have been well-documented cases of abuse of prisoners, and there are many issues surrounding the legality of—and conditions in—the U.S. military detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. There are many groups of concerned citizens and professional groups inside and outside the United States who—while they have no sympathy with Al Qaeda's ideology and strategy of violence—find these sorts of seemingly government-condoned reactions at variance with claims of “civilized” democratic governance. Much the same can be said about legislative responses introduced in both the United States and the United Kingdom. For example, the USA PATRIOT Act and the United Kingdom's Prevention of Terrorism Act have both been subject to extreme criticism both within the judiciary and from civil liberties groups.

All of these themes appeared in a tape recording, supposedly from Bin Laden, that was played and translated by the *Al Jazeera* news organization in April 2006. According to the transcript, Bin Laden first of all urges Muslims to “punish the perpetrators of the horrible crime committed by some Crusader-journalists and apostates against . . . our prophet Muhammad.” He goes on to place this within a continuing and extensive “crusade” against Muslims that can be seen in Palestine, Sudan, Bosnia, Indonesia, Kashmir, Pakistan, Chechnya, Somalia, France, and of course Iraq. He accuses the infidel of using “murder, destruction, detention, [and] torture” and urges all Muslims to use themselves and their material possessions in support of the jihad.³⁴ Al Qaeda, however, remains a small group, and its ill-defined ideological goal of some sort of caliphate is rejected by an overwhelming majority of Muslims (as well as by non-Muslims). In this sense it has similarities to the RAF. However, governments should be cautious about allowing Al Qaeda to create credible propaganda opportunities from which it can generate a degree of success. The West German experience suggests, perhaps, that current policies in relation to security force behavior (especially military), prisoners and prison conditions, and legislative changes should be reviewed.

Notes

1. The first generation RAF was also called the Baader-Meinhof Gang after its two most famous founders, Andreas Baader and Ulrike Mienhof, who also killed herself in Stammheim in May 1976.

2. The RAF never had a hard core membership of more than 20 or so.

3. For a fuller and somewhat contemporaneous account of these events see Kurt Shell, “Extraparliamentary Opposition in Postwar Germany,” *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 4 (July 1970): 653–80; and Richard Merritt, “The Student Protest Movement in West Berlin,” *Comparative Politics* 1, no. 4 (July 1969): 516–33.

4. Che Guevara, “Guerrilla Warfare,” in *Mao Tse-Tung and Che Guevara, Guerrilla Warfare*, translated by F. A. Praeger Inc. (London: Cassell, 1962).

5. *Ibid.*, 114.

6. Che Guevara quoted in Robert Taber, *The War of the Flea* (London: Paladin, 1970), 31.

7. See Carlos Marighella, “Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla,” reprinted as an appendix to R. Moss, “Urban Guerrilla Warfare,” *Adelphi Paper* 79 (London: IISS, 1971).

8. Herbert Marcuse, “Ethics and Revolution,” in *Ethics and Society*, ed. R. T. De George (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 137–38.

9. “Marcuse Defends His New Left Line,” *New York Times Magazine* (October 27, 1968): 298–99.

10. Horst Mahler quoted in Hans Horchem, "West Germany's Red Army Anarchists," *Conflict Studies* (June 1974): 8–9.

11. Herbert Marcuse, "Re-examination of the Concept of Revolution," *New Left Review* 56 (1969): 17–25.

12. Ulrike Meinhof, quoted in Stefan Aust, *The Baader-Meinhof Group*, translated by Anthea Bell (London: The Bodley Head, 1987), 183.

13. Horst Mahler, *Kollektiv RAF: über den bewaffneten Kampf in Westeuropa* (West Berlin:Wagenbuch-Rotbuch, 1971), 43.

14. Mahler, *Kollektiv RAF*, 59.

15. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967).

16. Jean Paul Sartre, "Preface," in *ibid.*, 19, 25.

17. Mahler, *Kollektiv RAF*, 46 (emphasis in the original).

18. See *BBC News* on August 19, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2349195.stm>, where reference is made to the Hamburg-based Al Qaeda cell with four of its members being science students (accessed July 1, 2015).

19. Christopher Blanchard, "Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology," *CRS Report in Congress* (RS 21973, November 16, 2004): 3.

20. For example Bin Laden claimed that to "kill the Americans and their allies, both civil and military, is an individual duty for every Muslim who is able, in any country where this is possible until the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Haram Mosque are freed from their grip and until their armies, shattered and broken winged, depart from all the lands of Islam," quoted in Benjamin Orbach, "Usama Bin Ladin and Al-Qa'ida: Origins and Doctrines," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 5, no. 4 (2001): 60. Ayman Zawahiri, the deputy leader of Al Qaeda, has talked of the role of violence in rallying ordinary Muslims to the cause. See for example Christopher Henzel, "The Origins of al Qaeda's Ideology: Implication for US Strategy," *Parameters* 35, no. 1 (2005): 76.

21. RAF statement, *Der Spiegel*, January 2, 1975.

22. Zawahiri claims that attacking the United States will force Americans to personally wage battle against Muslims. See Henzel, "The Origins of al Qaeda's Ideology," 76.

23. Mahler, *Kollektiv RAF*, 33–34, 42.

24. Gudrun Ensslin quoted in Aust, *The Baader-Meinhof Group*, 44.

25. Aust, *The Baader-Meinhof Group*, 150.

26. *Ibid.*, 145.

27. *The Times* (London), December 5, 1974.

28. *The Times* (London), November 2, 1980.

29. Hans Joachim Klein in Jean Bougereau, *Memoirs of an International Terrorist. Conversations with Hans Joachim Klein* (Orkney: Cienfuegos Press, 1981), 19–21.

30. See Martin Oppenheimer, "The Criminalization of Political Dissent in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Contemporary Crises* 2 (1978): 97–103.

31. Iring Fetscher, "Terrorism and Reaction," in *International Summaries—A Collection of Selected Translations in Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice*

(Washington DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, 1979), 45–51.

32. *The Times* (London), May 26, 1978.

33. For example, in December 2014 the Senate Intelligence Committee released a scathing report about interrogation techniques employed by the CIA that (the report argues) not only violated legal, moral, and ethical guidelines but also failed to provide any useful information that led to the apprehension of key terrorist operatives or the disruption of their plots. See Stephen Braun, “The Senate Committee’s Report on the C.I.A.’s Use of Torture,” *New York Times*, December 9, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/12/09/world/cia-torture-report-document.html> (accessed July 1, 2015). Meanwhile, also in 2014, classified documents released by former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed to the public a range of previously unacknowledged surveillance techniques and capabilities. Another particularly controversial effort was the practice of “extraordinary rendition” through which—as recounted by former CIA agent Robert Baer—prisoners would be sent to Jordan for “a serious interrogation,” to Syria “if you want them to be tortured” or to Egypt “if you want someone to disappear, never to be seen again.” See <https://www.aclu.org/fact-sheet-extraordinary-rendition> (retrieved July 1, 2015).

34. See <http://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2006/04/2008410162648212577.html> (retrieved July 1, 2015).

The Role of Democratization in Reducing the Appeal of Extremist Groups in the Middle East and North Africa after the Uprisings

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THE TOPIC OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has preoccupied scholars and policymakers for a number of decades, coming to the forefront of the international scene following the 9/11 attacks. In that context, numerous analyses pointed to authoritarianism as one of the principal explanations for the spread of political violence stemming from the Arab World.¹ A number of scholars and policymakers argued quite convincingly that the principal reason for the emergence of terrorist groups in the region was the absence of democratic procedures, which could have channeled the dissatisfaction of citizens more peacefully. The closed nature of political systems was identified as the primary cause of “terror” due to the fact that genuine opposition political movements were unable to access the system and influence public policy. In order to remedy the lack of access, often such groups were driven to violence. Accordingly, it follows that once the link between authoritarianism and political violence is established, the straightforward idea that democratization would solve the problem of political violence is also accepted.

The Arab Awakening, or Arab Spring, has further increased the interest in understanding regime changes and their consequences on the politics of the region. The enthusiasm with which the Arab uprisings were initially received was partly based on the assumption that democratization and regime change would have a positive influence in curbing political violence. The Arab uprisings have indeed brought about significant political change across the region, but the Awakening did not bring about the widespread democratization of the region that many initially expected, nor has the amount of political violence diminished. In fact quite the opposite is true. In the short and medium term, as Steven Heydemann points out, only Tunisia is on a credible path of democratic consolidation.² The majority of countries have seen the retrenchment of authoritarian rule (Egypt), its survival despite the challenges (Morocco and Bahrain), or its persistence (Jordan, Mauritania, the GCC states, and Algeria). Finally, some other countries have plunged into civil conflicts or instability (Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen).

This chapter examines the relationship between processes of democratization following the Arab uprisings and political violence in the region, and analyzes four different but interrelated aspects of such a complex relationship. First, this study looks at the problematic nature of the Arab uprising and its consequences with a specific focus on the opposition movements that initially benefited from the opening up of the political space. Thus, the role of Islamist groups is crucial because it is also in the name of Islam that many violent groups operate. Second, this study challenges the assumption that democratization will inevitably reduce the appeal of extremist groups, if we equate extremism with the use of violence. By drawing on the literature that deals with the link between democracy and terrorism, it will be argued that democratic governance per se cannot defeat terrorism, particularly its transnational manifestations. This is because the nature of terrorism emanating from the area is not simply linked to the absence of meaningful representation. The relegitimization of state authority in the Middle East and North Africa through the adoption of democratic procedures is certainly a necessary first step to stem the wave of radicalism that is engulfing the region. But, it would probably only be effective in moderating those groups that are already committed to pursuing their goals through nonviolent means.

In addition, the consequences of failed transitions following many of the uprisings have increased the amount and reach of political violence, with a number of countries facing significant security challenges. The fact that democratization and violence might not be directly linked poses a problem for the international community. For decades the Western

international community, chiefly the United States and the European Union, was ambivalent about democratization in the Middle East and North Africa. While Western powers were rhetorically committed to it, the reality on the ground often pointed to their implicit or active support for authoritarian stability. Following the uprisings and the initial wave of democratization, both the United States and the European Union seemed to set aside their doubts and supported a process of regime change, even instigating the one in Libya. However, the failure of many uprisings to deliver stability changed once more the attitude of Western countries. The return of this ambivalence further fuels a sentiment of injustice that feeds the extremist views of the radical, violent groups, particularly in contexts where state institutions have been weakened or have collapsed as in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen. Finally, this chapter will offer some recommendations on how the international community could help bring about not only a more democratic MENA region, but also a more “just” international system that would attempt to address the socioeconomic roots of the uprisings.

The Arab Uprisings and the Issue of Democratization

When one observed the leaders in power before early 2011, when the Arab Awakening began, it seemed to confirm the assertion that the region was stuck in its authoritarian past and that the enormous political transformations that had led to the demise of many authoritarian regimes elsewhere had completely bypassed the Middle East and North Africa. However, the authoritarian systems in place—ranging from monarchies (Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States) to military juntas in disguise (Algeria) to patrimonial police states (Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya) to “hereditary” republics (Syria) and to Islamic Republics (Iran)—had seen some significant changes, including the liberalization of the economy, modernization of political institutions, and modifications in the social structures of each country.³ These changes, however, did not make any impact on the nature of these regimes, which remained solidly authoritarian, transferring policy-making and decision-making power away from formal institutions to informal ones. The survival of authoritarian rule in the Arab World at a time of democratic globalization needed to be explained, and it came in the form of the paradigm of authoritarian resilience. In 2007, Heydemann explained that authoritarian rule in the Arab World survived and even thrived precisely because it rode the wave of democratization.⁴ Rather than staunchly refusing to adapt, Arab regimes adopted a skeletal form of democratization—a market economy, elections,

an active civil society—while shifting political power in informal networks of privilege and patronage. The ruling elites managed to hold on to power by pretending to delegate it. This theory of modestly transformed authoritarianism seemed to suggest that no change would come to the Arab World for a long time.

Although the intention of the theory was not to predict the future, numerous studies adopted it to explain the mechanisms through which rulers across the Arab World managed to stay in power. However, the Arab uprisings dented the theory of an Arab World unable to change and challenged the assumption of Arab political apathy.⁵ Processes of regime change in a number of countries swiftly began, following the departure of leaders who had been in power for decades such as Ben Ali in Tunisia or Mubarak in Egypt. A new era of democratic change across the regions seemed about to begin, with a number of commentators talking of a 1989 moment for the Arab World (in reference to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe). However, regime change has been far from easy, and the domestic and international enthusiasm subsided shortly after the beginning of the uprisings, allowing for renewed pessimism about the fate of democracy in the Arab World. The failure of genuine democratization to take place revived many of the scholarly debates about the relationship between the Arab World and democracy.

One type of explanation has once again resurfaced, focusing on the centrality of Islam in the life of the majority of the citizens in the region.⁶ The fundamental argument offered by this explanation is that the Arab World is uniquely unsuited to democracy, and where change occurs it is not in a democratic direction, but toward a new type of authoritarianism. In particular, it is argued that Islam demands submission to the ruler and this leads to political “quietism,” whereby citizens should remain passive and refrain from questioning the legitimacy of those who govern. This passivity is not conducive to democratic change, because democracy requires confrontation and discussion, while Islam actively discourages both. Obviously, this explanation is discredited precisely by the fact that ordinary Arab citizens have been far from quiet across the region for the last few years. In order to deal with this obvious contradiction, some have noted that the democratic problem is essentially the outcome of a lack of clarity regarding the role religion should have in public life.⁷ Islam is perceived to be a total religion where politics and faith are indistinguishable. It follows that this obstacle remains every time an institutional rearrangement occurs—even one that is the result of a popular uprising.

Another type of explanation centers on the traits of Arab culture and its political manifestations, particularly the ones linked to tribalism and

sectarianism.⁸ According to proponents of this argument, the authoritarian nature of Arab culture—with its emphasis on the tribal leader distributing both social and economic benefits—leads to political ramifications that support authoritarianism. Thus, the leader of the state utilizes state resources to reward those who belong to his tribe or clan, rather than setting up a system based on equal citizenship. Rival tribes and clans are therefore in constant conflict over the possession of the state. In this context, the uprisings are nothing but popular outbursts that bring to power different ruling elites that will behave according to a tribal or sectarian logic. Thus, uprisings might adopt the slogans of democracy and freedom, but the strength of Arab political culture prevails in the longer term, leading to renewed sectarianism. The absence of uprisings in a number of Arab countries then indicates that existing tribal or sectarian loyalties are still solid.

Other scholars focus their attention on the absence of an active civil society and argue that without this dimension it is virtually impossible to democratize and support democratic institutions once established.⁹ The uprisings have thrown into question the passivity of Arab civil society, and even more importantly, the passivity of large strata of the population. While traditional civil society might not have been responsible for the uprisings (and one would need to look into “unusual suspects” to find evidence of activism under authoritarian rule), there is no doubt that the perceived apathy of ordinary Arabs has been fundamentally challenged with the uprisings.¹⁰ The inability to spur democratic change is thus not about apathy, but about the civic quality of the social groups emerging out of authoritarian rule. In this respect an old argument about civil activism being too Islamist to be positive for democratization has been reprised.¹¹ The inevitable conflict between an assertive, powerful, and inherently illiberal and undemocratic Islamic civil society and a secular liberal and democratic one is offered as an explanation for the failure of democratic change to take hold and therefore explains the return to authoritarian rule.

Scholars more concerned with structural explanations focus on the interrelationship between economics and politics. The rentier state theory¹² argues that the leaders of countries relying on external rents can afford to separate themselves from the political demands of ordinary citizens because they are able to offer services and buy off potential dissent through redistribution. The absence of taxation and the independence of the productive apparatus from the political system allows for authoritarian forms of rule. Oil and gas would constitute the core of external rents, and most countries in the region have these resources available to them while the countries that do not could still be considered semirentier due to the spill-over effects of the regional rent.¹³ Scholars might be on more solid ground

here when one analyses where uprisings have taken place and to a certain extent succeeded. The largest rentier states have been able to put in place economic packages that seemed to deal with the growing discontent, suggesting that significant revenues from oil and gas resources can be employed successfully to stave off political change. However, it should also be emphasized that two oil states—Libya and Bahrain—have been severely affected by the uprisings, with the Gaddafi-led regime falling in the spring of 2011.

Explanations focusing on institutions and political actors are more convincing than cultural or structural ones, and it is necessary to turn to these if the persistence of authoritarianism in the region in the aftermath of the uprisings and its relationship to political violence is to be understood. The ability of several authoritarian leaders to remain in power despite their lack of popular legitimacy, the return of authoritarian rule, and the collapse of state institutions can only be convincingly explained by analyzing the ideology, strategic motives, and behavior of both domestic and political actors. In this chapter the focus is on Islamism in all its “declinations” because the groups that can be defined as Islamist are very diverse and often in conflict with each other. It is thus the nature of the main opposition to the ruling elites in power for decades that helps explain the political dynamics of the region.

The most significant change that the Arab uprisings brought about is that they have given a chance to Islamist movements to experience political power. The arrival of Brotherhood-inspired Islamists to power in Tunisia and Egypt, their significant role in Libya and Yemen, and their high-profile presence within the Syrian opposition has had profound consequences both domestically and internationally, altering already precarious relations. Historically, an interesting aspect of the Middle East and North Africa is that all regimes in the region—despite their enormous social, economic, and ideological differences—have faced (and in most cases still face) an opposition that has largely framed its political discourse in religious terms. Thus, for example, both Saudi Arabia (a rentier monarchy with very solid ties to the West and an orthodox conservative brand of Islam) and Syria (a socialist secular republic with a “bad” reputation in the West) face domestic political challengers that draw references from Islam for their political demands.

The term *Islamism* here “refers to the rise of movements and ideologies drawing on Islamic referents—terms, symbols, and events taken from the Islamic tradition—in order to articulate a distinct political agenda.”¹⁴ The vast majority of Islamist movements across the region have been able to mobilize popular support through a combination of social activism and

populist discourse, with the objective of providing a clear alternative to the regimes in place. These regimes are all accused, irrespective of their ideological nature, of being “unjust” and of having failed the communities they rule over. To a certain extent, all groups that embrace Islamism can be considered revolutionary because their fundamental objective is indeed to revolutionize the societies they live in by radically transforming the political (both domestic and international), social, economic, and cultural relationships that currently exist. The demands that such groups make on the political systems they operate in are “radical” because they generally entail the dismantling of the current structures of power. The rise of the Islamists in recent years has led some to reexamine Islamist politics after the uprisings,¹⁵ but it has also led to the deepening of suspicions both nationally and internationally, leading to calls for a return to authoritarian stability and normality with the implicit assumption that Arabs can only be ruled through an “iron fist.” The fallout of the 2003 misguided war in Iraq has further destabilized the region, and the political volatility that the invasion and its aftermath generated has fed into the uncertainty of processes of regime change.

Ruling elites had been able for a long time to reshape their authoritarian stronghold on state structures through a combination of repression and co-optation.¹⁶ This dual strategy was hugely successful because of the fundamental mistrust of Islamist movements in both domestic and international circles. Radical Islamism, irrespective of its many variants, was perceived to be a danger for democracy, and opening up the political system to their participation (it was widely believed) would consign all these countries to another form of authoritarian rule, which would be even more intense because of religious dogmatism. Thus, small but influential sectors of domestic society fearful of an Islamist takeover, as well as the international community in general—since at least the Algerian case in the early 1990s—have supported the repression of Islamists.¹⁷ Fear of Islamism was used to secure support and legitimacy for regimes throughout the region, and is an important part of the story of authoritarian survival.

The Arab uprisings seemed to fundamentally undermine all these assumptions. When the Arab masses in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Bahrain, Morocco, Mauritania, and Libya rose up in the first few months of 2011, they did not do so in the name of religion. Islamist slogans were notably absent from demonstrations, which insisted on buzzwords such as liberty, bread, dignity, and accountability. Islamist movements were caught off-guard by the size and intensity of the antiregime demonstrations and only joined in after much hand-wringing and usually at the behest of their

younger militants, more attuned to the spirit of the demonstrators. In fact, it is only because of their cross-ideological nature that the protests were successful in a number of countries. The uprisings were therefore interpreted as the liberal-democratic opportunity of the Arab World. Subsequent events dispelled this myth, and the best-organized and best-supported political movements—Islamist parties—were able to gain political power in Tunisia and Egypt through free and fair elections. Islamists came to power in Morocco too, but still under the guidance of the powerful executive monarch.

Prior to these events, much had been written about the way in which Islamists would behave once in government, and post-uprisings politics provided the opportunity to see what they would do.¹⁸ The experiences in power—in Tunisia and Egypt—would inevitably influence other regional and international actors and their perception of Islamism.¹⁹ In addition to the close attention paid to the Islamists' behavior in power in transitioning countries, different forms of Islamism developed in countries where transitional politics failed almost from the start, namely Syria, Yemen, and Libya. In these contexts, just like in Iraq, Islamists tended towards violent confrontation with the regime and with other political actors, conflating once again Islamism with violence.

There have been a number of consequences from the rise of Islamism and how it has been then perceived, despite the significant differences that exist within it and the environments in which Islamist groups operate. First, there has been increasing conflict between the Islamist and the secular sectors of society. In countries where political pluralism emerged, cultural wars developed around the vision of society and the meaning of democratic politics. The heightened ideological confrontation, no longer kept under control by an authoritarian regime, helped undermine transitions where they were taking place and led to a renewed desire for political stability that in both domestic and international circles equated with the return of authoritarian leaders to power. The case of post-uprising Egypt in this respect is paradigmatic.

Further, the experience of pluralism and democratic politics led to even greater divisions within the Islamist camp itself. How to deal with democratic politics and what role Islamists should play in it had divided Islamists for quite some time, but most of the debates were highly theoretical because there was no democracy anywhere to be active in across the region. The Arab uprisings changed this, and Islamists in many countries were now confronted with the reality of having to decide what role to play, if any, in the new plural political system and how to play it. The ideological and strategic differences between Islamists have had a profound impact on

how Islamism as a whole has been perceived following the uprisings. Finally, post-uprising politics has once again placed the role of political violence center stage, particularly in countries where civil wars have broken out as a consequence of the challenge to decades-long authoritarian regimes. For Islamists, it has been one thing to find a role in countries where the old regime simply folded as in Tunisia, but it has been quite another to deal with the repressive, violent measures implemented in Syria by the Assad regime and another still dealing with the near complete breakdown of law and order in Libya, Iraq, and Yemen. The use of violence has thus become prominent in many different settings, leading to the simplistic assumption that many Islamists can only take power, hold it, and employ it through the gun. These three broad consequences of the uprisings on Islamist politics have done very little to change the perception of Islamism both domestically and internationally, generating fears of change and encouraging problematic calls to a return to stability, usually interpreted as the return of authoritarianism to avoid chaos.

Does the nature of Islamism justify such fears? It is very difficult to determine whether Islamist movements are democratic or authoritarian if they are analyzed in isolation from their environment.²⁰ It seems, however, that assuming a priori that they are not and cannot be democratic actors, by virtue of their Islamist ethos, is more the product of a purely political agenda rather than an objective examination. This is in fact the crux of the problem. Islamist groups have a set of both domestic and international policy objectives that fundamentally clash with the visions and interests of sectors of Arab society, current authoritarian rulers, and the international community, particularly the United States and the European Union. The problem therefore is not really the lack of democratic credibility these movements have, because empirical evidence has now told us that under certain conditions they can be elected to power through free and fair elections without fearing that they would abolish the system that brought them to power. The problem seems to be the political and social consequences that their arrival to power would entail: a challenge to the domestic, regional, and international status quo.

The problem of democratization is a genuine one, but it would be a profound mistake to see the uprisings simply as a temporary outburst of popular discontent before the inevitable return to “business as usual” authoritarianism. The revolutionary wave that began in early 2011 has changed the region, and while its institutional effects might not be felt for some time, a return to the status quo ante is nearly impossible. It is for this reason that we must come to grips with Islamism and correctly identify its many different and often conflicting stances in light of the ideological

references they have, the strategies they adopt, and—crucially—the environment in which they operate.

The attitude of the international community to the problem of democracy in the Middle East and North Africa before the uprisings was clearly summarized by Zakaria: “the Arab rulers . . . are autocratic, corrupt, and heavy-handed. But they are still more liberal, tolerant, and pluralistic than those who would likely replace them.”²¹ This attitude has not much changed after the uprisings, and while it might be justified in some contexts, in many others it is not. It is in fact counterproductive in the long-term.

Political Violence and the Absence of Democracy in the Middle East and North Africa

The relationship between the type of political regime and the degree of political violence present in a country has always been a rather complex one.²² Three different schools of thought can be identified in this respect.²³ One argues that democratic societies are indeed much more prone to experience political violence directed against the political system due to the “openness” of democracy itself, which by its very nature finds it very difficult to deal with groups operating in the shadows through violence. This would lead to the assumption that violence does not stem from a lack of access to the political system, but from a perception of “illegitimacy” in terms of the rules of the game, irrespective of how democratic they might appear to be. This is particularly the case when fundamental identity values appear to be threatened. It follows that authoritarianism might be more capable of dealing with this type of dissent through repression. Others have argued that the absence of democracy in itself is the primary generator of political violence because authoritarian regimes do not allow for the free expression of political demands and this leaves disaffected groups no other choice than to resort to violence in order to promote their views.

A third school of thought argues that such clear-cut distinctions based on theoretical assumptions about the nature of both democracy and authoritarianism are not possible. Instead, the argument goes, we should concentrate on the degree of political violence that occurs. Thus, on the one hand, democracies may experience more episodes of political violence, but usually they are of reduced intensity and are eventually eliminated, particularly if the political system remains open and abides by the procedures of democracy. On the other hand, authoritarian regimes may experience fewer episodes of political violence through “pre-emption by repression,” but when such violence occurs it is usually on a very large scale, bordering on or escalating to open insurrection.

Empirical evidence is mixed and largely depends on the definitions of democracy, authoritarianism, and political violence that one uses. What is interesting, however, is that in the post-9/11 world the second school of thought has prevailed among policy makers and security experts. This has led to the largely unquestioned belief that the absence of democracy in the Middle East and North Africa is the principal cause of terror. The obvious outcome of such an understanding about the nature of political violence and terrorism is the assumption that if democracy were to triumph across the region, then such violence would disappear.

This is certainly the logic behind two major diplomatic initiatives that the Bush administration launched following a comprehensive review of American foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa: the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Broader Middle East and North Africa Partnership Initiative (BMENA) undertaken under the auspices of the G8. Both are based on the assumption that democratization in the region will reduce and, possibly, eliminate the threat of political violence.²⁴ This approach—sincerity and credibility notwithstanding—is laudable in itself because it offers the opportunity for the United States to radically alter its long-standing policies towards the area in favor of the establishment of accountable governments. However, the objective of defeating political violence through democratization does not take into account the complexity of local national politics, the diverse nature of Islamist radicalism, and the international nature of political violence stemming from the region. The linkage between democratization and political violence might in fact be much more tenuous than what both MEPI and BMENA—or the European Union's democratization programs for the Mediterranean region, for that matter—entail.

The degree of political violence that some of the countries in the region had known before the 2011 uprisings was, with the exception of Algeria, not necessarily linked to the issue of democratic governance and needs to be examined within the context of national politics, given the enormous political, social, and economic differences that characterize these countries. Following the Arab Awakening, political violence has expanded significantly, but, once again, the linkage with democracy is not as clear-cut. A broad overview of the countries in the region is helpful in highlighting how the issue of democratic governance might not be so central in understanding political violence. As mentioned earlier, Algeria is the only exception to the general pattern in the region. In the Algerian case, the cancellation of the electoral results in January 1992—which had swept the Islamist movement to victory—and the imprisonment of thousands of members of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS, *Front Islamique du Salut*) party had a very clear

impact on the decision of the Islamists to choose armed struggle in order to have the party reinstated to power. The brutal civil war that followed spun out of control with the emergence of mindless Islamist violence and the setting up of governmental death squads, but it should not be forgotten that the cancellation of the elections is what triggered the civil war.²⁵ Even in this rather clear-cut case, however, it should be noted that the FIS was involved in violence for a relatively short period of time and that the party participated in peace talks with other Algerian political entities in order to arrive at a negotiated solution to the war as early as 1995. The Algerian military, however, dismissed this attempt and did not even participate in the talks. The type of Islamist extremist violence that began to emerge after 1995 and that was carried out by groups such as the *Groupes Islamiques Armés* (GIA) is more in line with Salafism and would hardly be appeased by the reintroduction of democratic governance.²⁶

The violence that swept through Egypt during the 1990s was quite different from the type of widespread political violence that characterized Algeria during the same period. It was in fact the product of a Salafi ideology that certain small terrorist groups such as *Jamaat al-Islamiyya* subscribed to. It was not necessarily a reaction to the authoritarian Mubarak regime, but had much more to do with the wider problem of the legitimacy of the ruler to govern without making specific references to God's authority, as well as with the policies the regime implemented. The absence of democratic procedures to determine the direction of the country was not the primary motivator for choosing violence, as a democratically elected leader—even one belonging to the Islamist camp—would have faced such a violent challenge to his legitimacy to rule. It is doubtful that these armed groups would have welcomed democratic rule, which in their ideology is equated with a form of government that bestows authority upon the people rather than to God, making such a government illegitimate. Specific references to this issue are made in the writings of the radical ideologue Sayyid Qutb, to whom these groups look for ideological inspiration.²⁷

It should be noted that some of the imprisoned leaders of both groups called for a cessation of hostilities and admitted that the armed struggle was not the "appropriate" means to make political demands,²⁸ while other leaders such as Ayman al-Zawahiri became involved in transnational terrorism.²⁹ The removal from power of the Muslim Brotherhood through a military coup during the summer of 2013 failed to ignite an armed insurrection, suggesting that the Brothers have, on the one hand, decided that taking the military on might be leading to their complete demise and, on the other, that their commitment to nonviolence is now fully integrated in their ideological outlook. In this respect, it is the absence of widespread

violence following the coup that is interesting. Small, violent groups have also been active in Jordan and Morocco and have very little to do with the absence of democracy in both countries. The opening up of the political system to pluralism—leading to the election of a leadership enjoying a popular mandate—would not solve the problem of legitimacy and authority to rule, which is what these extremist groups are concerned about. The countries in the Arabian Peninsula face the same type of problem.

In addition to this general point about extremist violent groups, it should be noted that countries in the region do not have the same authoritarian intensity and, while some scholars dismiss the idea of partial or semidemocracies,³⁰ the degree of liberalism that is present seems to positively correlate with the increase of violent actions by extremist groups. This follows quite precisely from the assertion that more “liberalized” states are more easily targeted due to their relative openness. This would explain why Morocco and Egypt, which are considered to be less authoritarian than Tunisia and Syria, experienced more political violence until the uprisings. The Syrian civil war obviously has changed the perception of the linkage between democratization and political violence, but some commentators suggest that the Syrian opposition is increasingly uninterested in building a democratic Syria and strives for the creation of an Islamic state that will have strong authoritarian illiberal features.

In this context, it should be emphasized that the very popular and more mainstream radical Islamist movements in most countries of the region do not subscribe any longer, and some never did, to the idea of overthrowing the current regimes through armed struggle. Most of the current Islamist leadership across the region has come to terms with the need for electoral democracy in order to get to power and transform society, having witnessed the catastrophic effects of the use of violence on the fabric of society. Through a combination of social activism and political demands for reform, such groups seem to have made the strategic decision to pressure their own governments to open up without resorting to the use of violence, which they routinely condemn.³¹ This is the case, for example, of the two largest Islamist movements in Morocco—the Party of Justice and Development and the Justice and Spirituality Group. It is also the case for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. While the Egyptian Brothers had a poor experience in government, their removal through violence has not led them to embrace violence as a reaction. In Syria, the Brotherhood attempted to remove Hafez Assad from power through an open armed rebellion in the early 1980s, but the uprising failed. This led to collaborating with other forces to provide an alternative to the Assad regime, and it is only when the latter responded with violent repression to the demands of

ordinary Syrian citizens that the Brothers decided to create an insurrectional army in cooperation with other political groups. Violence was not the first choice; it became the only one in the face of state-sanctioned repression. Mainstream *Ikhwani* Islamist movements have a very diverse supporting constituency, which includes the disenfranchised youth, as well as a relatively wealthy middle class, and they need to reconcile the diverging interests that arise.³² This “catch-all” characteristic makes these movements more moderate, as multiple influences have to be collated.

However, the formal subscription of these movements to the procedures of democracy does not make them necessarily less radical in terms of the policies they would wish to implement once in power, particularly in terms of economic redistribution, foreign policy, and social behavior. This is an important aspect of the story of radical Islamism because participation in the construction of a democratic society is not synonymous with the abandoning of their “revolutionary” goals. It is, in fact, the fear that the electorate would mandate the implementation of such policies that prevents all the regimes and their international allies (if they have any) from undertaking the necessary reforms. It is precisely on this issue that the transitions to democracy have faltered across the region with the exception of Tunisia, where secular and Islamist parties have found a degree of common ground.³³

The nature of radical Islamism is very complex, and if we are to understand the reasons why certain groups decide that only armed actions will deliver their political objectives, we have to be aware of the enormous differences that motivate Islamist groups to act. This has important repercussions on the relationship between democracy and political violence.

A number of clusters of “Islamisms” can be identified.³⁴ First of all, there are those Islamist groups that combine their legitimate political and social actions with what they perceive to be a national liberation struggle. This is the case of the Palestinian Hamas, the Lebanese Hizbollah, and Iraqi insurgents. Their armed struggle has not had much to do with issues of democratic legitimacy of the political space they operate in, and is instead perceived to be the product of military occupation from outsiders.³⁵ What is almost paradoxical about these movements is that they operate on a rather democratic national political stage. Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority have systems that permit political pluralism and ensure a certain protection for individual rights and freedoms. The violence that stems from Hamas, Hizbollah, and Iraqi insurgents is not linked to the perception that violence is the only option to force the national arena open to their demands. The national space is in fact accessible to them, as the presence of Hizbollah ministers in the Lebanese government or the Hamas

victory in the January 2006 Palestinian elections illustrate. In the Palestinian and Lebanese case, their “violent extremism” is inextricably linked to what they regard as Israeli expansionism and colonialism, and the end of violence in this context is entirely independent from the democratization of Lebanon and Palestine.

In the Iraq case, the violent struggle has been against U.S. troops in the first instance and later against a democratically elected regime that is seen in many parts of the country—particularly in the Sunni heartlands—as a sectarian occupying force. The forces battling the Iraqi army are far from being interested in pluralism and democracy, with some of them belonging to a transnational trend informed by armed Salafism. This leads to the discussion of a second cluster of Islamism that can be identified as making references to the Salafi tradition. Groups belonging to this cluster, as mentioned above, are not interested in “democratic politics” and would question the legitimacy of any ruler, even if it came to power through free and fair elections. To a large extent, the members belonging to these groups are not motivated to act through violence because their respective national political systems do not offer the means to express their demands, but are motivated by a wider sense of injustice that characterizes their outlook on the society they belong to. If national governments in the region were held accountable to their citizens, these democratic regimes might implement some of the policies that these groups approve of, but the fundamental problems of “divine authority and sanctioning” would remain. What would also remain is the possibility that such elected governments would implement policies that the electorate mandates, but are contrary to the perception of true Islam that these groups are attached to. This would once again drive them to fight, in their eyes, an illegitimate government. Within this cluster we find groups that operate transnationally with the objective of creating ‘new’ states that derive legitimacy entirely from a very narrow and sectarian interpretation of religion.

The third cluster of Islamism can be labeled “the Brothers’ Islamism” and does not condone the use of violence to replace the current regimes (at least, not any more). These groups have not necessarily abandoned their radical demands and policies, but by rejecting the use of violence they have made it clear to both supporters and rivals alike that they have already bought into the possibility and necessity of democracy in their respective country. Those militants who follow such a path are unlikely to be attracted by more extremist groups, particularly if we take into account that the attempts to overthrow regimes in the past failed miserably and only brought increased repression on the movement itself. The Tunisian Islamists of al-Nahda can be cited as a paradigmatic example of a group

integrating into and contributing to a pluralistic and democratic political system.

The varied nature of Islamism seems to indicate that the absence of democracy is not the primary motivator for extremism. Most violent groups would probably remain committed to the armed struggle even in the event of an opening up of the political system because of the problematic nature of the legitimacy to rule and the confrontational nature of the international situation between the West and the world of Islam. Radical Islamist groups that made the choice of nonviolence seem simply to be biding their time until the system collapses from within, and are certain that they already control society and need only to wait for the political system to formally acknowledge that. Finally, the two MENA regional movements that are truly committed to large-scale violence—*Hamas* and *Hizbollah*—direct it against an external enemy rather than using it to contest the legitimacy of their own national political systems.

There is a third aspect to violent Islamist extremism that must be examined: its international manifestations. French scholar Olivier Roy emphasizes that “it is the neo-fundamentalist international networks”³⁶ that constitute a threat when they espouse violence in order to re-Islamize Muslim societies and when they espouse the Huntingtonian belief of a clash of civilizations based on irreconcilable cultural differences. The presence and activism of transnational Islamist terrorism based on such “cultural” premises is also unlikely to be the product of “national authoritarianism,” and therefore it is unlikely that its disappearance will be achieved by democratizing the national political space. The ideological underpinning of radical international Islamism is linked to the Salafi ideology that would question democracy as the method through which leaders should be selected. Moreover, transnational extremist groups have the objective of re-creating the Caliphate, which inevitably bypasses the national political stage, as the groups fighting between Syria and Iraq amply demonstrate. These groups largely attract people who are not necessarily disaffected by the absence of democracy in their respective countries, but are motivated by their belief that they are witnessing a cosmic struggle between injustice and justice.³⁷ The democratization of the national political space would not diminish the appeal of such an outlook, as the proliferation of jihadi groups in Tunisia and Egypt before the 2013 coup illustrates.

Democratization and the International Community

The literature on transitions to democracy has traditionally marginalized international factors from its explanations for the collapse of

authoritarianism and the initiation of a democratic transition. Such an approach focusing exclusively on domestic explanatory factors has recently been challenged and, currently, it has become accepted that processes of democratization cannot be understood without making reference to the surrounding international environment.³⁸ In particular, the focus is on the most important political actors in the system because they have placed democracy promotion at the top of their foreign policy agenda. This is the case for both the United States and the European Union (both as a single entity and in its constituent members). It is assumed that such a prodemocracy international environment is particularly beneficial for those domestic actors who are pursuing the objective of democratization because they will increase the amount of resources (in terms of financing, diplomatic support, and legitimacy) available to them in their struggle to overcome those who resist democratization. Thus, the very positive role of the European Union in bringing about change in Eastern Europe is often highlighted,³⁹ as is the role of the United States in contributing to the democratization of Latin America.

However, such a positive role of the international community needs to be reassessed in light of the policies implemented in the Middle East and North Africa.⁴⁰ In this region of the world, the international activism of both the United States and the European Union has been aimed at stopping processes of democratization when the outcome of it is perceived to be unfavorable to the stability of the international system and detrimental to their own interests. Starting with the transition to democracy in Algeria between 1988 and 1992, it is quite easy to demonstrate that the priority of ensuring a move away from authoritarianism in the country shifted quite considerably once it became clear to the international actors concerned—and particularly France—that the main beneficiary was going to be an Islamist party that was committed to radical policy changes. The rise of political Islam across the region had been identified by the late 1980s as the new menace that would affect the stability of the international system,⁴¹ and both the European Union and the United States began to undertake policies that would ensure the survival of the current friendly authoritarian regimes in the region while at the same time isolating the unfriendly authoritarian ones without pushing for their demise.

The strategy of support for authoritarian regimes rested on diplomatic, military, and economic pillars. From a diplomatic point of view, the international community provided inclusion in international forums (for instance the Euro-Mediterranean strategy put in place by the European Union) and ensured that these regimes would not suffer the political consequences of their authoritarianism by having sanctions placed on them

due to their human rights abuses. From a military point of view, most of the authoritarian allies were gradually brought into the military structure of the United States and key European countries through joint maneuvers, training of officers, sales of weaponry, and access to military expertise. From an economic point of view, some countries—such as Algeria—were granted the rescheduling of debt, so that the government would have the necessary resources to fight the insurgency, while others signed free trade agreements with the European Union (Morocco and Tunisia) and the United States (Morocco) that would permit the ruling elite to reap enormous economic benefits from the “crony” liberalization of trade. Egypt was virtually bankrolled by the United States as a reward for its role in the first Gulf War, as was Jordan for the role it played in trying to resolve the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. All these benefits increased the amount of resources available to the regimes, which were then used to withstand the domestic pressures for democratization, allowing the ruling elite to reshape and renew the domestic constituencies upon which they could rely for political support.

The evidence clearly points to the “antidemocracy” role that the international community played in the region for fear that the democratization process would reward parties that planned to reverse many of the policies of the regime they would be replacing. This policy of support for authoritarian but friendly regimes did not change much after 9/11 despite the rhetoric emanating both from Washington and Brussels. There were some genuine attempts to put pressure on certain regimes like Egypt to become more accountable, but this has yielded very few results.

The Arab Awakening generated a degree of international enthusiasm because the uprisings seemed to suggest that the region was ready for liberal democratic change. As mentioned earlier, Islamist slogans were notably absent from the demonstrations, and the protests were squarely aimed at local rulers rather than against international actors, the West, or Israel. The huge popular support that calls for regime change enjoyed among ordinary Arab citizens made Western actors reconsider, at least initially, their support for authoritarian rulers and for authoritarianism more generally. Both the European Union and the United States criticized in part their own previous policies of support for authoritarianism and set about attempting to ride the democratic wave.⁴² Islamist victories in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia—and the consequences they had beyond their national borders—dampened the enthusiasm of the international community because they were destabilizing for the domestic politics of such countries. In addition, Western support against Gaddafi and Assad was rather rapidly questioned both in the United States and in Europe when the civil wars

engulfing the two countries brought to prominence violent Islamist groups with a very strong anti-Western agenda.

The problem for the West lies in the fact that the search for a liberal secular alternative to both the authoritarian regimes and to Islamism has not been successful because, at the moment, such an alternative simply is unavailable.⁴³ The polarization of the political discourse between Islamists and secular actors across the region is what characterizes transition politics at this very moment, and the “third party” that Western powers would like to see emerge is not a viable option at a time when there are heightened sectarian tensions gripping the entire region. A secular and liberal Arab civil society does not have much support; its potential representatives are usually intellectuals that have very little connection to the reality of the masses in terms of lifestyle and beliefs and whose discourse does not deal with the most important issues that ordinary citizens have.

A New International Approach to Democratization in the Region

The promotion of democratic governance in the region by Western powers should certainly be an integral part of a strategy aiming at reducing national and international tensions and therefore reducing the appeal of violent political activity emanating from the region. The successful democratization of the Middle East and North Africa would be an important stabilizing factor, as the new regimes in power would enjoy electoral legitimacy and would be accountable to the electorate. The democratic process, by virtue of its pluralism, ensures that all sectors of society would have the possibility to influence public policymaking, which would be removed from the currently unaccountable leaderships. The democratization of the Middle East and North Africa, however, can only be successful if it meets the expectations of the local population and “respects” the choices of the electorate. When the end goal of democracy is subsumed to other strategic interests, it loses value and appeal. In the short term this would mean having to bear with a process that might deliver results and policies that are problematic to accept. In the long term, however, the institutions emerging from such processes of regime change are more likely to be lasting and have popular legitimacy.

The inability of the United States and Europe to accept Islamist parties and movements thus far as potential democratic actors has fundamentally undermined the international efforts to encourage democracy. The case of Egypt is paradigmatic, and while the Brothers have governed badly, the solution to Egypt’s problem cannot be a return to a military-led government. Material and diplomatic support has been granted again to friendly

authoritarian regimes who are engaged in satisfying the economic and security interests of the West (broadly defined) in exchange for token liberalizing gestures. The supposed post-9/11 policy changes with respect to how the theme of democracy in the region should be approached are, at closer scrutiny, quite disappointing and have not yet altered the suspicions of the West vis-à-vis Islamist parties. This leads to a lack of credibility and further emboldens those who “speak out” against the hypocrisy of the West, particularly after the hopes of the uprising have been shattered pretty much across the entire Middle East and North Africa. Unless there is a real shift away from the preconceived notions that Islamist parties are bad for democracy, and there is a realization that a “third force”—which would be secular and liberal—is unlikely to emerge in the short term, the persistence of authoritarianism will be continually facilitated. Accepting Islamist parties as “partners” would likely entail a willingness to sacrifice certain interests in the short term and would entail accepting that new regimes would not be as close to the West as they are now. So far, such willingness does not exist even if free and fair elections deliver power to Islamists.

However, it should be highlighted that democratization is certainly a positive outcome in itself because it can help to ensure a degree of legitimacy that current rulers do not enjoy, though it might not be the panacea that some expect it to be. In order to reduce the appeal of political violence, it might be necessary for the United States and the European Union to take into account other issues that are probably closer to explaining the violence emanating from the region.

First of all, a reduction in political violence might stem from an equitable solution to the Palestinian issue. In this respect, it would be necessary to come to terms with the fact that the Oslo peace process is dead and buried. Palestinians do not believe in it any longer because of the lack of progress on the key issues such as settlements, right of return for refugees, and the status of East Jerusalem. In this context, new actors have managed to come to the fore precisely by rejecting the structure of the agreement. This does not imply that Hamas is against peace per se and that its ideological goals cannot be pragmatically toned down. Much research in effect suggests quite the opposite,⁴⁴ but in order for Hamas to be able to renounce violence, Israel needs to do more in terms of concessions—and only the international community, specifically the United States, can force them to do that. As long as the United States is perceived in the region not to be an honest broker but a backer of Israel, the plight of the Palestinians will be a mobilizing factor not only for local groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but also a rallying cry for transnational terrorist groups

pointing out that Israel enjoys the backing of the West in its attempt to subjugate the “Arab World.”

A second policy shift that Western countries should make has to do with military and economic pressure on what they consider unfriendly regimes in the region such as Iran. Economic and diplomatic sanctions can be a useful policy tool to send a signal to unfriendly authoritarian regimes that they need to modify their behavior and open up their political systems if they are to fully participate in the international game and reap the benefits of constructive engagement. However, this cannot be done in the absence of a general policy that applies to all countries that are undemocratic. Western countries should adopt a policy of “equal treatment for equal dictators,” because the continuation of a regional policy based on double standards can be easily used to highlight the hypocrisy of Western states and feeds into the belief that the real goal of the powerful West is to crush those states that stand up to its dominance and not the creation of more democratic societies.

A third policy shift has to do with the war in Iraq, which, far from contributing to the stability of the area, is widely perceived as the new episode in the struggle between the crusading West and the world of Islam, and it constitutes a powerful recruiting tool for the international neofundamentalist movement. Opposition to the military incursion into Iraq by the vast majority of political actors in the region, be they secular or Islamist, had stemmed from the knowledge that such an undertaking would be detrimental to the cause of democracy and to the cause of civilized dialogue. The current reality of the conflict bears witness to the fears that were expressed before the intervention. Military intervention should not be the default option for the United States and some of its allies, because the legacy of its interventionism has profound negative repercussions on public opinion within a region that is already unfavorable to U.S. policies for both historical and current reasons.

If we add to this the credibility gap in promoting democracy that the West generally suffers from, it emerges quite clearly that, in isolation, democratization in the region might not solve the problem of political violence. The “war on terror” might be very long indeed and the Arab uprisings might have added fuel to the fire.

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India's Response to Terrorism in Kashmir

Behram A. Sahukar

PAKISTAN-SPONSORED TERRORISM REMAINS ONE OF THE gravest threats to India's security and stability. Full-blown separatist Islamist violence against India erupted in Jammu and Kashmir (shortened to "Kashmir" throughout this chapter) in 1989 at the end of the Afghan jihad, and has taken a tragic toll of human life on both sides. It is estimated that over 63,000 persons have been killed in India as a result of terrorist-related violence, and that over 850,000 persons have been displaced from their homes. Of this, about 40,000 have died since 1989 in Kashmir alone.¹ This chapter will primarily address the issue of cross-border terrorism in Kashmir, and the Indian response to Pakistan's proxy war and jihad in Kashmir.

Historical Context

The origins of the Kashmir issue go back to 1947, when the British planned to grant India its independence on August 15, 1947. To meet the demands of the Muslim League, the British created Pakistan out of the Muslim-majority areas of British undivided India, which would serve as a homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. The rulers of the 565 princely states were to accede at the time of independence to either India or Pakistan. In most cases, the dictates of contiguous borders or geography made the decision a simple one.



Map 16.1 (Central Intelligence Agency)

However, the case of Jammu and Kashmir posed a peculiar problem: a Hindu raja, Hari Singh, ruled over the Muslim-majority state, and its borders were contiguous to both India and Pakistan.² Hari Singh asked the viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, for additional time to reach a final decision and did not accede to either India or Pakistan. To force the issue, Pakistan attacked Kashmir on October 22, 1947, and Hari Singh turned to India for military assistance. On October 26, 1947, the beleaguered maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession, legally joining the Indian Union. The following day, India sent troops to counter the aggression and stemmed the Pakistani advance.

India then took the case to the United Nations (UN), which brokered a conditional ceasefire in January 1949 that established (roughly) the present-day Line of Control (LOC). Pakistan was required to withdraw all its troops from Kashmir. This was to be followed by a plebiscite to determine the

future of Kashmir. However, Pakistan continues to occupy approximately one-third of Kashmir to this day and considers the Kashmir issue to be the “unfinished agenda of Partition.” It still feels wronged by the legal decision of the Hindu ruler to accede to India when his state came under Pakistani attack.

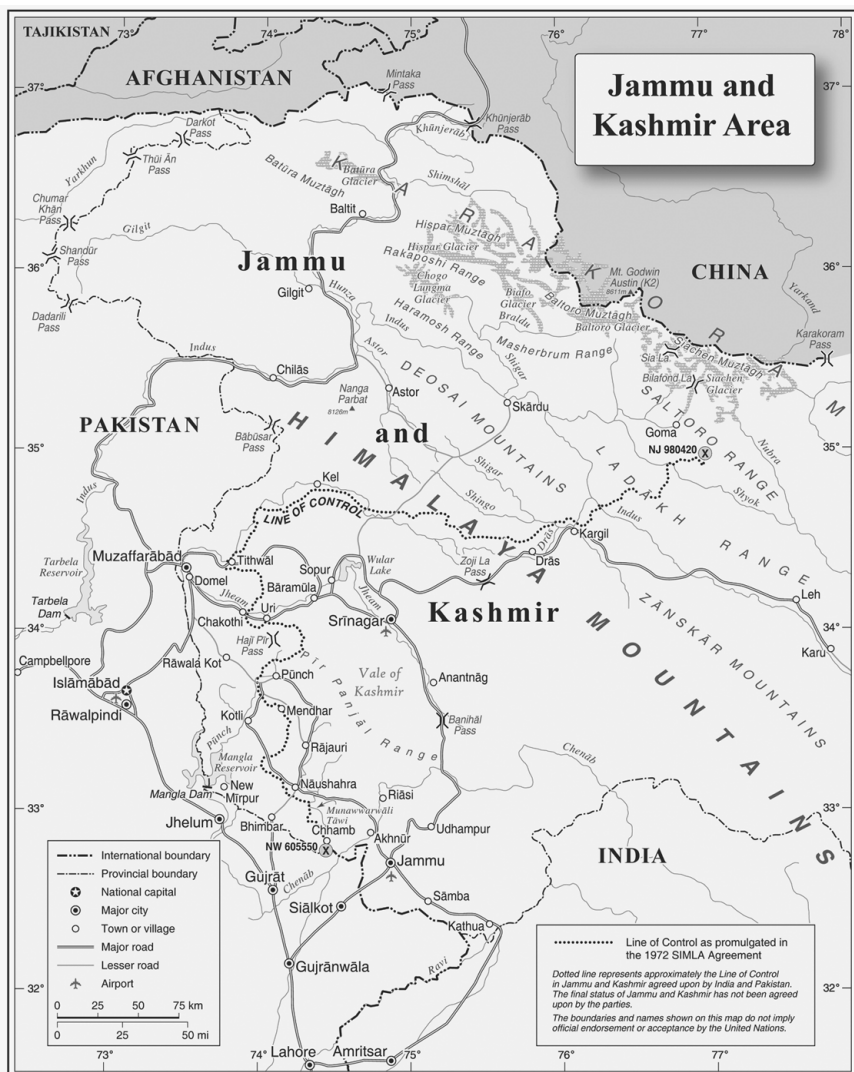
In September 1965, Pakistan launched another unsuccessful military attack (Operation Gibraltar) seeking to wrest Kashmir from India by force. In December 1971, civil war in East Pakistan escalated to an all-out war with India. Pakistan suffered a humiliating defeat in the west, and lost all of East Pakistan. Over 93,000 men of the Pakistan Army surrendered to Indian forces and were taken prisoner.³ Bangladesh emerged as a new independent nation from the ashes of East Pakistan.

The 1971 war had an important impact on the Kashmir issue. The Simla Agreement, which was signed in July 1972, stated that all issues between India and Pakistan—including Kashmir—would be resolved bilaterally in a peaceful manner. The 1949 UN ceasefire line in Kashmir was formalized as the LOC. No change in the status quo was permissible unless this was done peacefully and by the mutual consent of both India and Pakistan.

The humiliation of the 1971 war also scarred the psyche of the Pakistani Army, which vowed to avenge its defeat by India at an opportune time. Despite its failed attempts in the past, Pakistan remains obsessed with the idea of taking all of Kashmir from India by force.

The Afghan Jihad

When General Zia ul Haq came to power in 1975, he intensified the policy of Islamization of Pakistani society and the Pakistani Army. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 made Pakistan a frontline state in the U.S.-funded jihad against the Soviet Union. The infusion of CIA-funded arms, equipment, and other forms of support into Pakistan legitimized the use of Islam to fight an Islamic holy war. The end of the Afghan jihad in 1989 left Pakistan flooded with surplus arms and equipment, as well as a cadre of Islamist fighters experienced in a prolonged, low-intensity conflict. Mujahideen who had completed their successful mission against the Soviets were diverted to continue their fight for Islam in Kashmir. According to this plan, the Inter-Services Intelligence would fund and train the jihadi insurgents and coordinate the Islamist agenda against India. The Pakistan-sponsored Islamist campaign of terror that began in 1989 has ravaged Kashmir and spilled over to the rest of India. Hundreds of terrorist cells have been established in Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Bhutan, encircling India in a web of terror backed by Islamic extremism.



Map No. 3953 Rev. 4 UNITED NATIONS
December 2011

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Map 16.2 (Jammu and Kashmir, Map No. 3953 Rev. 4, December 2011. Courtesy of the United Nations)

Operation Topac

In 1988, Pakistan prepared a strategy “to bleed India by a thousand cuts” (code-named Op Topac). Having lost three conventional wars against India, it planned to fight an asymmetrical war by waging a low-intensity proxy war in Kashmir and then extend it to the rest of India.⁴

The Kargil Conflict

India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in May 1998. Emboldened by possession of the “ultimate weapon,” Pakistan sent its army and mujahideen fighters in May 1999 to occupy the icy heights of eastern Kashmir at Kargil on the Indian side of the LOC. Pakistan sought to internationalize the Kashmir issue, and to test India's response to an armed Pakistani intrusion under the backdrop of nuclear weapons.⁵ Though taken by complete surprise, India had no option but to launch a costly but limited military response to dislodge the intruders in the Kargil sector. It refrained from expanding the conflict to other areas, or from crossing the LOC into Pakistan. American diplomatic pressure and the Indian military successes forced Pakistan to withdraw its troops. Following this humiliation, a military coup led by the army chief, General Pervez Musharraf, in October 1999, ousted the elected government of Nawar Sharif. The army was back in power in Pakistan, and soon after, terrorism in Kashmir surged. Since many Indian Army units (which were deployed elsewhere in a counterterrorism role) had been diverted to the Kargil sector, terrorist attacks in various parts of Kashmir met with initial success. Suicide (Fedayeen) attacks in particular increased against security forces, and additional Indian troops were sent into Kashmir to counter the growing frequency and intensity of terror attacks.⁶

Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Kashmir

Countering terrorism in Kashmir has posed a serious challenge to India. India's 176 million Muslims form approximately 14 percent of its billion-plus population. The Indian Muslim population is second in size only to Indonesia, and narrowly outnumbers the Muslim population of Pakistan.⁷ The vast majority of Indian Muslims are moderate in their views and do not take part in terrorist-related activities. Efforts by Al Qaeda (and other international jihadi groups such as the Islamic State currently fighting in Iraq and Syria), have had little appeal for Indians to join the global jihad.⁸ The Muslims and other minority communities of India have integrated well in all areas of Indian society and government.⁹ India is very mindful

of the fact that its counterterrorism policies in Kashmir must not radicalize its Indian Muslims.

Admittedly, Indian political bungling and manipulation have exacerbated the complex situation in Kashmir. The genesis of present-day terrorism in Kashmir can be traced to alleged electoral manipulation in the 1986 State Assembly elections, which led to disgruntlement and a loss of faith in the central government. Pakistan was quick to seize the opportunity and began to arm and train Kashmiri youth in Pakistani camps to fight against Indian misrule. The LOC afforded many gaps in the physical de facto border and offered concealed routes through which armed Indian and Pakistani militants in large numbers could sneak in and out of India and Pakistan (often with assistance from the Pakistan Army). The terrain in Kashmir is mainly mountainous and forested, providing ideal conditions for terror operations from safe havens inside Pakistan, and speedy escape to protected terrorist sanctuaries across the LOC. Observation is limited, and movement of conventional counterterrorism forces is slow and arduous.

Some of the objectives of the terrorists in this contested region are:

- Destabilize India by inciting large-scale communal violence between Hindus, Muslims, and other minorities through widespread terror tactics;
- Subvert the loyalty of moderate Indian Muslims and incite them to conduct antinational activities by coercion, fear, and religious indoctrination;
- Restore the glory of former Muslim rule over all of India and annex Kashmir to Pakistan by waging a jihad; and
- Terrorize all non-Muslims and moderate Muslims living in Kashmir and force them out of Kashmir.

Terrorist Targets

Initially, the targets of these terror attacks were the security forces and military installations. However, the focus has more recently shifted to soft targets, including a mix of the following:

- Attacks on civilians in buses, trains, marketplaces, and families of soldiers deployed on the borders;
- Attacks on places of Hindu worship and pilgrims on their way to holy mountain shrines in Kashmir (mainly during the Amarnath Cave pilgrimage trek near Srinagar);
- Forcing security forces to attack mosques and religious places in which terrorists were hiding, such as the Charar-e-Sharif, and the Hazrat Bal mosques;
- Killings and abduction of Kashmiris, tourists, and foreigners to demand release of captured terrorists;¹⁰

- Attacks on symbols of Indian democracy, such as the State Legislature building in Kashmir, the Indian Parliament, and the Red Fort;
- Disruption of free and fair elections, attacks on security forces, assassination of politicians, political candidates, and killing of voters;
- Hijackings of civilian aircraft to demand release of captured terrorists in return for freeing the hostages and the aircraft. For example in December 1999, Indian airlines IC 814 on route from Kathmandu to Delhi was hijacked in flight by several armed Pakistani terrorists with 191 passengers and crew on board;¹¹
- Attacks on India's economic progress such as the Mumbai bombings of 1993 (that killed over 257), the 2002 bombings (that killed over 52), and the July 2006 train bombings (that killed over 200 and injured over 800); and
- The 2008 Fedayeen multiple targets attacks in Mumbai, resulting in 166 killed (including 25 foreigners) and over 316 injured.¹²

Methods and Trends

Among these terrorist attacks in (or related to) Kashmir, the following trends are prevalent:

- Use of roadside improvised explosive devices especially against military convoys and civilian transport;
- Kidnapping and killing of government officials and innocent civilians traveling by bus or in their own transport;
- Indiscriminate grenade attacks in busy marketplaces, bus stations, railway stations, and during gatherings to celebrate holy Hindu festivals;
- Use of car bombs to cause mayhem and panic at odd hours and in busy city centers;
- Suicide attacks by Fedayeen who gain entry into government buildings and places of worship, and carry out indiscriminate firing until security forces eliminate the Fedayeen;
- Large-scale infiltration across the LOC to establish bases and weapons caches within the wooded and mountainous areas, so that terrorist operations can continue into the winter when heavy snowfall makes infiltration difficult;
- Efforts to expand operations into the rest of India with the help of Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate-funded local sleeper terrorist cells, and establish terrorist bases in Bangladesh and Nepal;
- Use of women for surveillance, as couriers, and for active operations;
- Use of madrasas as schools of jihad and hate; opening up of new madrasas in Bangladesh, India-Nepal border areas, and along the Rajasthan border with India;
- Equipping insurgents and terrorists with modern communication equipment, weapons, and explosives to inflict maximum damage, including surface-to-air missiles and chemical weapons capability;

- Increased use of military uniforms, fake documents, and military vehicles to gain entry into sensitive areas in order to launch suicide and car bomb attacks;
- Arm, train, and radicalize Indian Muslims to form terrorist groups and carry out terrorist attacks in Kashmir and the rest of India (for example Indian Mujahideen, Students Islamic Movement of India); and
- Infiltration by sea with Fedayeen squads to attack multiple targets simultaneously to inflict maximum damage, cause confusion and terror, then occupy soft targets, killing occupants until the Fedayeen are finally killed by the security forces (for example the November 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks).

The Indian Response

The “no war, no peace” low-intensity conflict situation prevailing in the sensitive region of Kashmir has posed a serious challenge for India to counter terrorism in an area populated by its own citizens, particularly in determining the proper rules of engagement while also supporting the democratic process.

Rules of Engagement

In dealing with terrorism, the fight has been led mainly by the army, supported on the ground by a mix of paramilitary forces and law enforcement agencies. India follows a very strict policy with regard to the rules of engagement. These are based on “the use of minimum force” and acting in “good faith.” The Indian Army has almost never used its heavy weapons, tanks, artillery fire, or air support when combating terrorism. In addition, India’s counterterrorism operations have been conducted within the recognized boundaries of India (except for a deployment in Sri Lanka as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force [IPKF] at the invitation of the Sri Lankan Government, where from 1987–1990 the IPKF became embroiled in counterterrorism operations against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). India has never attacked another country or used preemptive force to counter terrorism.

Even when provoked during Pakistan’s Kargil misadventure in 1999, India did not cross the LOC to dislodge the militants. In 2008, though India had sufficient proof that the 2008 Mumbai Attacks were launched by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists from Pakistan, India chose to respond through diplomatic and legal channels rather than initiate punitive military action against the terrorist training camps and locations inside Pakistan. India’s responses have always been reactive and restrained rather than proactive or overly belligerent.

India has learned that while military force may kill terrorists, it cannot defeat terrorism unless the real or perceived grievances in Kashmir are also addressed. India is in a difficult position, as terrorism and jihad against it is being sustained from across its borders by a hostile, nuclear-armed Pakistan. India's strategy in fighting terrorism in Kashmir has been derived from the successes and failures of its vast experience in counterterrorism and insurgency operations in the Northeast, Punjab, Sri Lanka, and Kashmir.¹³

India's response to terrorism in Kashmir is multidimensional, to include the military response to tackle violence, border management to prevent infiltration, political dialogue and negotiations with all parties that have given up violence, economic measures to improve the living conditions and job prospects of the local population, diplomatic initiatives toward peace to include confidence-building measures (CBMs) with Pakistan, and international counterterrorism cooperation with friendly countries.¹⁴

Democratic Process and Elections

India has ensured that despite the turmoil and instability in Kashmir, the democratic process is kept alive. Elections have been held regularly, and these are both free and fair. Though over 800 people were killed by terrorists in the 2002 elections to the Kashmir State Assembly, over 28 percent in the Valley and 70 percent in Ladakh voted. In the April 2006 by-elections to the State Legislature, over 70 percent voted. In the February 2005 elections to 63 urban civic bodies, there was an average voter turnout of 48 percent. Surprisingly, in many of the terrorism-affected areas of Srinagar, over 80 percent of the registered voters cast their vote.¹⁵ The transparency of the electoral process has done much to restore the faith of the people in good governance and fairness, and undermined the false propaganda by Pakistan that the wishes of the people in Kashmir have been muzzled. In the recent Indian general elections held in April/May 2014, over 50 percent voter turnout was registered in Kashmir despite threats by the terrorists to disrupt the process.¹⁶ Elections to the State Assembly were held in October 2014, and an even higher voter turnout of 65% was recorded.¹⁷

Military and Civic Aspects

The Army's Northern Command has the prime responsibility of tackling terrorism and insurgency in Kashmir.¹⁸ After the Kargil war of 1999, an additional Corps Headquarters (HQ) was set up to control operations

in eastern Kashmir and Ladakh sectors. India has approximately 300,000 troops in Kashmir. It is willing to reduce this number if Pakistan shuts down the 42 terrorist training camps in Pakistan (identified in 2013), and stops Islamic extremists from using them as a launch pad for terrorist activities against India.

The whole area in Kashmir has been divided into an interlocking and mutually supporting “counterinsurgency grid.” The size of each grid varies according to the terrain. Normally each grid is looked after by a battalion or a brigade-sized formation that is responsible for operations within the grid. These areas of responsibilities have been subdivided laterally into tiers extending rearwards in depth, so that any terrorists that manage to evade the first tier or second tier are subsequently trapped in the rear areas, and apprehended or killed.¹⁹

Operations of the Army, police, and the paramilitary forces are coordinated by a Unified Headquarters. The paramilitary forces include the Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and elements of the National Security Guard (a specially equipped counterterrorism unit manned by the police and the Army).

In addition, the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) is a specially organized force to deal specifically with counterinsurgency in Kashmir. The RR will free the Army from counterinsurgency duties in the long term. The RR battalions are deployed under Five Sector Headquarters covering all the vital terrorist-prone areas of Kashmir.

Preinduction Training

Theater and Corps Battle Schools have been set up in Kashmir for mental and physical preinduction training for all units. They impart a four-week syllabus in which the units are “fine-tuned” to the peculiarities of waging a successful counterterrorism and counterinsurgency campaign in Kashmir. In addition, a new Army Doctrine on Sub Conventional Warfare was published in 2006 by the Army’s Training Command that includes a special chapter on counterinsurgency operations. It emphasizes the fact that the “people” are the center of gravity in counterterror/insurgency operations. As such, the risk of collateral damage and civilian casualties in adjoining areas should be minimized during counterterrorism operations. A newly formulated concept of using “an iron fist in a velvet glove” was introduced. This implies that the security forces would be mindful of the needs and concerns of the local population while conducting relentless offensive actions against terrorists. Military success would no longer be measured solely by the number of terrorists killed or captured. Instead,

surgical strikes (based on actionable intelligence) against known terrorist locations rather than wide-area, heavy-handed, counterterrorist operations should be employed, even if this results in some terrorists escaping at times.²⁰

Specialized Training

The Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare (CIJW) School in Mizoram in India's Northeast province places special emphasis on the importance of winning popular support and respecting human rights in counterinsurgency operations. In many cases, the Army units have to "un-learn" the lessons of conventional warfare, and change not only their way of functioning in war but also their mental attitude to fighting in an insurgency-prone area that is rural and semiurban.²¹ Joint training between the U.S. and Indian Special Forces has been conducted recently at the CIJW School and in the Ladakh sector of eastern Kashmir. These exercises revealed valuable lessons in counterinsurgency operations for both sides and are held at regular intervals in India and abroad. There is also growing defense and counterterrorism cooperation between India, the United States, and Israel. Israel is India's second largest arms trader (second only to Russia).²² India also recently conducted joint counterterrorism exercises with many other countries including Russia, China, and Afghanistan (2013).

Employment of Surrendered Militants

A policy for the voluntary surrender and rehabilitation of misguided Indian Kashmiri militants was introduced in August 1995. The main objective of this policy is to offer monetary rewards and incentives to Kashmiri militants who were lured by Pakistan and now want to give up terrorist activities. The Indian government has recently increased the monthly incentive given to these surrendered militants to \$40, which is a welcome inducement because jobs are hard to find. The government also invests approximately \$3,000 in a fixed deposit account for a period of three years in each surrendered militant's name. At the end of this period, the money with interest is handed over to him for his use if he maintains good behavior and proves continued loyalty to India. Additional incentives are also offered for turning in weapons, and for providing actionable real-time intelligence such as current infiltration routes, locations of training camps, weapon and explosives caches, and providing the names of terrorist leaders and the exact location of their cells.²³ Vocational training for gainful employment is also offered to the surrendered militants.

So far, the policy has proved to be fairly successful, and over 3,700 militants have willingly surrendered. They have been organized into a Special

Operations Group called the Ikhwans, and have been employed in the forefront of successful offensive operations that have killed or captured militant leaders and unearthed caches of arms, explosives, and ammunition.

Counterinfiltration and Border Management

It is estimated that at any given time there are about 3,000 militants operating inside Kashmir, and about 300 trained militants are waiting to infiltrate into India from Pakistan. The prevailing conditions along the LOC are ideal for small-armed groups to move with impunity from bases in Pakistan into Kashmir. To plug the major infiltration routes, India has recently built a fence along most of the 470 miles of the LOC, and deployed surveillance radar, ground sensors, and early warning detectors. Unmanned aerial vehicles and drones are also used to monitor any hostile movement near the LOC. The India-Pakistan border is also fully fenced and patrolled and is proving to be an effective barrier to terrorists.²⁴

To secure the rear areas, retired Army soldiers from the local villages have been organized into village defense committees. They have been grouped into a lightly armed force to prevent terrorists from gaining a foothold in the vulnerable villages of the hinterland. Terrorists are therefore forced out of the semiurban areas into the inhospitable open terrain, where they can be hunted down by the security forces.

Following the brazen attack by Pakistan-based militants on India's parliament on December 13, 2001, India mobilized its armed forces to punish Pakistan by launching an all-out punitive war to destroy its terrorist infrastructure. However, India was prevented from attacking Pakistan by the United States and intense international pressure, as it was feared that India's action might escalate into a nuclear exchange with Pakistan. After assurances from Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf in January and May 2002 that he would take necessary steps to rein in the terrorists, India held off its advance and the troops returned to peacetime locations in October 2002.²⁵

Modernization and Training of the Security Forces

India has initiated an extensive modernization plan for its armed forces and units engaged in counterterrorism operations. These include the raising of additional Special Forces units and introduction of modern weapons, aircraft, communications, night fighting equipment, and lightweight body armor. Large-scale imports of defense equipment have been ordered

from the United States, Israel, Russia, and other friendly countries.²⁶ Concurrently, a concerted effort is also underway to modernize and reequip the Jammu and Kashmir police and the Rashtriya Rifles with the latest weapons and equipment, in order to ensure interoperability with the Army and to keep pace with the modern arms and equipment used by the terrorists. Additional resources have been used to enlarge the Rashtriya Rifles to 65 battalions. Improved pay scales and increased benefits for the families of those killed in action, coupled with intensive counterinsurgency training, have raised the morale of the police.

Intelligence Reorganization

Intelligence agencies have been reorganized and allotted additional funding to make them more reliable in providing actionable real-time intelligence. A new Defense Intelligence Agency has been established, as recommended by the Kargil Review Committee, to coordinate military intelligence inputs.²⁷ Successful, relentless offensive operations based on accurate, actionable intelligence have raised the morale of the security forces and decimated the leadership of the terrorist organizations operating within Kashmir. Enhanced surveillance has reduced the infiltration across the LOC. Though sporadic incidents of grenade throwing and car bombings continue, the overall incidents of violence decreased from 3,479 incidents in 2003 to 2,586 in 2004, a reduction of 26 percent, while the comparative figures between 2004 and 2005 show a reduction of 34 percent. The daily rate of killings—including security forces, civilians, and terrorists—fell from 10 in 2003, to seven in 2004, to three in 2005. The estimated terrorist strength has been reduced from about 3,400 to 1,800. In 2006, the security forces killed over 75 top leaders of various militant groups.²⁸ Terrorist incidents in Kashmir and throughout India have shown a steady decline in recent years. Further reorganization of the intelligence agencies (such establishment of National Intelligence Grid and a National Counter Terrorism Centre) was recommended after the horrific 2008 Mumbai attacks, but these have yet to be fully implemented or become fully operational. Meanwhile, the role of the National Investigation Agency that was set up in 2008 has been expanded.²⁹

Special Legislation to Empower the Security Forces and Protection of Human Rights

Several areas of Kashmir have been designated as “disturbed areas,” and the security forces have been given special powers of search and arrest. They have limited immunity from prosecution under the Armed Forces

(Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (1990). However, judicial review and activism has ensured that any excesses are investigated promptly, and the guilty parties punished. While many human rights organizations have called for this act to be repealed, this has been resisted by the military.³⁰

The security forces and the Army in particular are very conscious of the human rights of the civilians and the rights of captured terrorists. The central and state governments have been very mindful of the conduct of its soldiers in counterterrorism operations. Any misuse or abuse of power has been dealt with severely. A Human Rights Cell has been operating since March 1993 at the Discipline and Vigilance Directorate at Army Headquarters. Additional human rights cells—based at Northern Command Headquarters and at Division Headquarters—monitor and take action on all allegations of human rights violations in Kashmir. The Northern Army reports that from 1993 to December 2013, 1,524 allegations of human rights violations were investigated, but only 42 of these were actually substantiated. A total of 124 personnel (including 41 officers) were found guilty and received stringent punishment.³¹ The Army has also articulated its own version of the “Ten Commandments” to be carried “on person” by every soldier serving in terrorism-prone areas. They include

no rape, no molestation or torture, no meddling in civil administration, respect for human rights, develop interaction with the media, restriction in the use of excessive force, upholding the code of conduct and honored traditions of the military, avoiding indiscriminate firing or harassment of civilians, impartiality during cordon and search operations, no acceptance of presents or gifts for performance of duty or otherwise, acting within the bounds of the law, avoiding the “body count” approach in counterinsurgency operations and maintaining relentless offensive pressure against terrorists.

At the national level, the National Human Rights Commission was established in October 1993 with limited judicial powers and acts as a watchdog to safeguard the human rights of all concerned.³² A similar organization designated as the State Human Rights Commission has been established in each state. Following the 2008 Mumbai attacks, antiterror laws were made more stringent. The Unlawful Activities Amendment (Prevention) Act 2008 was introduced, and has replaced the more draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2002. It introduces a fair justice system with avenues for appeal that are not prone to misuse or political manipulation. However, the punishments are stringent and some human rights are sacrificed for the sake of national security.³³ The lone surviving captured

terrorist, Ajmal Kasab, of the 10-member 2008 Mumbai Terrorist Fedayeen squad was tried and convicted in 2010 under this newly amended law, and given the death penalty. He was hanged in 2012 after a lengthy appeal process to save his life, which he lost.

Improving Media and Public Relations

A concerted effort has been made to improve the Army's relations with the media, so that a balanced picture of military operations is projected. The Army has its own publication, *Sainik Samachar*, a monthly newsletter covering all aspects of the military and its interaction with the local population throughout India. It is published in several Indian languages and is distributed widely for maximum readership and coverage.

To counter terrorist propaganda that usually aims to malign the conduct of the security forces, and to enable better media-military interaction to repudiate false rumors, a Public Information Directorate has been established at Army HQ. Qualified public relations officers have been posted in the forward Corps HQ as spokespersons for the Army. Media and diplomatic personnel are now encouraged to visit forward locations to see for themselves the situation in Kashmir. They are also shown captured arms, ammunition, and explosives. Proof of Pakistani involvement in terrorism is also made available for public viewing in the form of captured documents and photographs. The Army has also involved the media in projecting a positive and friendly image of the security forces. Some programs highlight the sacrifices the forces make every day in fighting terrorism and ensuring the safety and security of Kashmir and its inhabitants. The Army is also involved in using the Internet to neutralize jihadi Web sites and has its own Web site that is used to counter Islamist ideology. An Information Warfare Directorate has been established, which explores all facets of cyber security and the use of cyberspace.

Op Sadbhavana (Goodwill): Winning the Hearts and Minds

The Army has been actively involved in a large-scale "winning the hearts and minds" campaign, called Op Sadbhavana, to improve the living conditions and educational standards of the locals in Kashmir by establishing schools, computer learning centers, and vocational training centers; organizing health camps and medical treatment centers in far-flung areas; constructing and repairing bridges and houses damaged by enemy action or by the weather; assisting in farming by providing pumps for irrigation and provision of drinking water; adopting children made orphans by terrorist

violence; providing veterinary services for farm livestock; arranging for village seniors and children to visit various cities in India and in Kashmir to get a broader perspective of India; and offering technical assistance in the provision of radios, television sets, and computers.

Films and entertainment programs showing the rich cultural and religious diversity and unity of India have been a great draw and have helped in healing communal disharmony and allaying suspicion. The Army and the Air Force have always helped locals during natural calamities such as heavy snowfalls, floods, drought, and earthquakes. Op Sadbhavna and disaster management by the Armed Forces have been a great success in changing the attitude of the people toward the security forces for the better, and in weaning the people away from supporting the terrorists.³⁴

Economic Development

The central government has infused millions of dollars to give a boost to the flagging economy of Kashmir that has been ravaged by terrorism. In particular, the central government has loaned Kashmir 100 percent of the state's budget since 1990. In November 2004, the central government announced a reconstruction plan for Kashmir involving an outlay of approximately \$5.3 billion to expand the economic infrastructure and provide basic services, imparting a thrust to employment and income generation, and providing relief and rehabilitation to the displaced families of the state. Infrastructure sectors include power generation, construction of roads, education, health, civic amenities, tourism, agriculture, food processing, and generation of employment. In addition, \$1.3 billion has been earmarked to extend the existing railway network from Jammu to Srinagar and beyond in the Kashmir Valley. The whole railway line from Jammu to Baramulla is expected to be completed by 2017, and this will give a boost to the economy of the region. However, despite Kashmir's natural resources and potential for economic development, terrorism and instability have kept Indian business houses and foreign companies away from investing in Kashmir's economic improvement. Trade of limited goods across the LOC, regular bus services, and people-to-people-contact CBMs across the LOC have been introduced to speed up a transition to normalcy in the state (these CBMs were halted in the wake of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, but have now resumed). Tourism inflow, which at one time was the mainstay of Kashmir's economy, improved slightly during the last two years, but terrorism and the continuing instability in the state have kept most investors away.³⁵

International Cooperation and Diplomatic Pressure

India strongly supports the United Nations Security Council resolution 1373 (the counterterrorism measures passed following the 9/11 terrorist attacks), and has signed all 13 UN Conventions on Terrorism. It is also a signatory to the 1987 South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. India participates in Joint Working Groups on Terrorism with over 23 countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Israel, Germany, France, Canada, China, Russia, and the European Union. India also has mutual legal assistance treaties with 36 countries, which focus on bilateral cooperation in criminal matters such as drug trafficking, as well as the exchange of information about terrorist groups and joint antiterrorism training, among other activities.³⁶ Additionally, India and the United States have had regular Homeland Security Dialogue meetings since 2011.³⁷

Diplomatic pressure has worked to some extent in convincing Pakistan's leadership to crack down on the terrorist infrastructure within the country. However, the government in Pakistan, which receives military and economic aid from the United States for its support in the war against global terrorism, also has a long-term vested interest in supporting the insurgency and terrorism against India, and in keeping the Kashmir issue unresolved. The Pakistani terror groups, with support from the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate of Pakistan, maintain links with Al Qaeda and other international jihadi organizations, especially in Afghanistan and in the region. It is well documented that Osama bin Laden had spent several years in Pakistan before he was killed by U.S. Special Operations Forces in Abbottabad. U.S. drone strikes have killed a large number of Al Qaeda-affiliated and independent operatives in the ungoverned border areas with Afghanistan. Several terrorist groups like the Haqqani Network and the Pakistani Taliban are using safe havens located inside Pakistani territory to operate in Afghanistan and against India and to plot attacks against international soft targets.³⁸ This nexus of radical groups will eventually pose a threat to the United States as well.³⁹

Despite the evidence provided by India and the confession of David Coleman Headley (to the FBI in Chicago) implicating the Lashkar-e-Taiba, India has achieved only limited diplomatic success with Pakistan regarding prosecution of the handlers and organizers of the Mumbai 2008 attacks.⁴⁰ The United States has confirmed that terrorist groups on its list of "Foreign Terrorist Organizations" such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, and Harkat ul-Mujahidin have bases in Pakistan. In addition, other terrorist groups such as Al Badr Mujahidin, Harkat ul-Jihad-e-Islami, and the

Jamat ul-Mujahidin also operate from within Pakistan.⁴¹ However, India has failed to have Pakistan designated as a state sponsor of terrorism by the United States.

Peace Initiatives and Confidence-Building Measures with Pakistan

Several peace initiatives and CBMs as mentioned earlier have been initiated by India to bring down the level of mistrust between India and Pakistan. However, Pakistan has not yet dismantled the infrastructure of terror as it had promised to do repeatedly during public statements in January and May 2002, June 2003, and January 2004. A civilian Pakistani government replaced Musharraf's military rule in February 2008; yet, Pakistani sponsorship of terrorism against India has not abated. In fact, the 2008 Mumbai attacks were launched in November, just a few months after the Zardari government came into power.

Both Pakistan and India have taken a pragmatic approach to the Kashmir issue. The LOC has been transformed into a "working soft border," and people-to-people contact across it has been encouraged. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service was inaugurated in April 2005, and has become a regular feature reuniting many families on either side of the LOC. Additional routes linking other towns have been planned. During the October 2005 earthquake that caused extensive damage in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, India offered to help and opened up five crossing points along the LOC to facilitate easier movement of the affected people. There have also been talks on nuclear CBMs.

Following its landslide win in the Indian general elections in May 2014, the Modi government came to power in India. Prime Minister Modi invited his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif (among other South Asian leaders) to the swearing-in ceremony in Delhi. Despite positive statements from both sides regarding Kashmir and peacebuilding, little has changed on the ground between India and Pakistan. Mr. Modi visited Kashmir in August 2014 for the second time since his inauguration and promised to improve the lot of displaced persons (mainly Kashmiri Hindus) in the terrorism-ravaged state. During the visit, he also accused Pakistan of continuing to wage a proxy war in Kashmir and against India.⁴²

Pakistani Mind-set

India has ruled out any change in the international borders of Kashmir and has suggested that the beginning of a resolution of the Kashmir

issue could be made by converting the LOC into an international border. This is unacceptable to Pakistan, as President Musharraf said that the LOC is “part of the problem and therefore cannot be the solution.” President Musharraf had often stated that Kashmir runs in the “blood of every Pakistani,” and that “waging a jihad is not terrorism.” On several occasions, he had referred to Pakistani militants and terrorists as “freedom fighters.”

Such remarks do little to control terrorism and the Islamist ideology of exporting terror.⁴³ Little has changed during the previous (Zardari) and current (Nawar Sharif) civilian Pakistani governments. Several violations of the LOC took place in the recent months including unprovoked firings from Pakistan and the beheading of an Indian soldier along the LOC by jihadi elements of the Pakistani Army. However, India continues to follow a policy of restraint against these provocative violations of the 2003 cease-fire agreement by Pakistan.

Dialogue with Separatist Groups

The previous Indian government has initiated talks with several political parties in Kashmir with the support of the state government, and even allowed them to visit Pakistan for talks with Pakistani officials. India nominated Mr. N. N. Vohra, a well-known and respected senior figure, to be its interlocutor on Kashmir. Later, he was appointed governor of Jammu and Kashmir. In October 2010, three eminent figures, Radha Kumar, M. M. Ansari, and Dalip Padgaonkar were nominated as interlocutors on Kashmir. India has also offered to talk with separatist groups if they give up violence. Two roundtable meetings have been held with various groups in the past two years, though no real breakthrough has been achieved so far. Pakistan has also been more flexible in its approach, and is willing to discuss other matters in addition to Kashmir (which was previously considered the “core issue” between India and Pakistan). Under U.S. pressure, it has acted against Muslim extremists within Pakistan and on the Af-Pak border, but still allows terrorist training camps to operate in the Waziristan area. Unfortunately, little has been done by Pakistan to convict the Mumbai attackers especially Lashkar-e-Taiba leaders like Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, who move around freely in Pakistan while making incendiary remarks against India. Terrorist attacks against India from Pakistan have not stopped, and violations of the LOC continue to occur frequently. Despite the peace initiatives and improved relations, a mutually acceptable resolution of the Kashmir conflict does not seem any closer than before.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Terrorism in Kashmir has brought death and destruction to a large segment of the Kashmiri population, and adversely affected regional stability and the security of the whole of India. Since 1989, separatist violence in Kashmir has been backed by a radical Islamist ideology that aims to annex Kashmir to Pakistan and extend Islamic rule over India. Pakistan considers the issue of Kashmir as the “unfinished agenda of partition,” and remains in occupation of one-third of the Indian state. It has tried to take the rest of the state by force several times in the past and failed. In 1998, both India and Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons, and the conventional military superiority India had over Pakistan has been nullified in some ways.

India’s resolute military response to the unsuccessful Kargil war that Pakistan initiated in May 1999 underscored the fact that India was determined to thwart any attempt to change the status quo in Kashmir. The military coup in October 1999 that placed Pervez Musharraf in power resulted in a sudden upsurge in terrorism against India. In December 2001—just two months after 9/11—India’s Parliament was attacked by Pakistan-backed terrorists, and India mobilized its armed forces for a war to punish Pakistan. Pakistan’s repeated assurances that it would dismantle the terrorist infrastructure on its soil, coupled with U.S. pressure on both India and Pakistan, prevented an outbreak of a war that could have had a disastrous outcome. Both sides realized that continued hostility and acrimony was counterproductive to the peace and stability of the region. This realization led to the beginning of a comprehensive dialogue and peace process in April 2003, and the CBMs that India initiated.

In November 2008, the Mumbai terrorist attacks, which were launched by Pakistani-based Fedayeen from the sea while a civilian Pakistani government was in power, put all the CBMs on hold and severely dented the peace process. The attacks demonstrated how terrorists from Pakistan fighting for Kashmir have expanded their area of operations not only within India but also in Afghanistan, where twice suicide bombers (2008 and 2009) attacked the Indian Embassy in Kabul. The Indian Consulate in Jalalabad was attacked in May 2014. These attacks jeopardize the stability of the region as a whole. Indian soft targets have been attacked in Kabul and Jalalabad by Pakistani affiliated groups. Unfortunately, the jihadi factor and the anti-India military in Pakistan has been a hindrance to any lasting peaceful solution to Kashmir. Little has changed with a civilian government in Pakistan. Though Mr. Modi and the new Indian government in Delhi extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan on assuming

power in Delhi in May 2014, the terrorist groups based in Pakistan continue to kill and maim innocent civilians in India.

India has the will and the means to counter Pakistan's proxy war in Kashmir. However, the current need is for a realistic negotiated settlement and a firm policy against the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan. India must continue with good governance and the people-friendly approach in Kashmir. The practical approach could include the following:

- Pakistan must stop aiding and abetting Islamist groups on its territory and shut down all terrorist training camps on its soil. The Pakistani state must be held accountable for all so-called nonstate terror groups operating from its territory.
- Both sides could accept the division of Kashmir along the LOC and convert it to an international border between India and Pakistan.⁴⁴
- Trifurcation of Kashmir into three new states—namely Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, to satisfy the disparate regions of Kashmir—each with its own government and legislature within the Indian Union.
- Continue with the peace process and the comprehensive dialogue with Pakistan but maintain unrelenting pressure against the terrorists and their safe havens.
- Continue with the people-friendly approach and democratic process in Kashmir.

India's multidimensional policy for fighting terrorism in Kashmir seems to be working as terrorist-related incidents are reducing in number.⁴⁵ However, for the terrorist attacks to end and to find a just and lasting solution to the Kashmir conflict, India needs a genuine partner in a Pakistan that will first act firmly against the terrorist infrastructure on its soil.

Notes

1. Figures compiled from the Government of India, Annual Report Ministry of Home Affairs 2012–2013 and other sources from the media, which tend to vary. Junior Home Minister Jitendra Prasad reported to Parliament that 39,918 had died in terrorist violence from 1989–April 2011 in Kashmir. This included 21,323 terrorists, 13,226 civilians, and 5,369 security forces (*Express Tribune*, August 10, 2011, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/228506/40000-people-killed-in-kashmir-india/>). Some human rights groups and Pakistan media sources quote a much higher figure. Reliable figures of major terrorist attacks and casualties in Kashmir and in India are available at South Asia Terrorism Portal at <http://www.satp.org>. India has been fighting terrorism in the Northeast since 1956, in Punjab from 1981–1995, and in Kashmir soon after independence. Maoists (Naxalites), a right-wing group, have resorted to domestic terrorism since the 1960s. Also see U.S. Department of State

publication *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013* at <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224824.htm>.

2. In 1846, under the Treaty of Amritsar (after the Sikh empire was partially subjugated by the British during the First Anglo-Sikh war), Gulab Singh, a minor Dogra Hindu chieftain, became ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. Raja Gulab Singh consolidated his kingdom by annexing the Buddhist and Shiite regions of Ladakh to the east, and advanced north to Gilgit. The Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir comprises three major regions: Jammu in the southwest, which is predominantly Hindu; Kashmir, which is overwhelmingly Muslim and includes the fiercely contested Kashmir Valley; and Ladakh, which is mainly Buddhist. Overall, over 80 percent of the state is Muslim.

3. For a brief account of India's wars with Pakistan, see Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

4. The operation was code-named Op Topac (though there is some controversy in Pakistan regarding the actual code name, the Islamist proxy war operation was put into effect against India in Kashmir in 1988/89). See details in Rajeev Sharma, *Pak Proxy War: A Story of ISI, Bin Laden and Kargil* (New Delhi: South Asia Books, 2002) and M. H. Syed, ed., *Islamic Terror: Myth or Reality*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2002), 238–40.

5. See Ashley Tellis, C. Christine Fair, and Jamison Jo Medby, *Limited Conflict Under a Nuclear Umbrella: India and Pakistan Lessons from the Kargil Crisis* (MR 1450 USCA) (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001); and Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, for an account of the Kargil War. A brief account of the Kargil Conflict can also be accessed at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/kargil-99.htm>.

6. For an account of suicide attacks in India, see Lt. Col. Behram A. Sahukar, *Suicide Terrorism: Relevance in the Indian Context* (New Delhi: United Service Institution of India and Vij Publications, 2009).

7. Figures taken from Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life project December 2012, online at <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-muslim/>.

8. There have been some reports that a small number of Indian Muslims are currently fighting with ISIS in Syria; see "India Tracking 18 Desi Jihadis in Iraq, Syria," *Times of India*, July 9, 2014; and "Two Indian-Origin Workers Working for ISIS, Al Qaeda: Officials," *Indian Express*, September 22, 2014. In September 2014, Al Qaeda claimed that it had opened a branch in India to recruit Indian fighters; see "Al Qaeda Adds Branch on Indian Subcontinent," *The Oregonian*, September 5, 2014; and Andrew MacAskill, "PM Modi Says Al Qaeda Will Fail in India-CNN," *Reuters*, September 19, 2014, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/09/19/india-modi-idINKBN0HE0PN20140919>.

9. For example, during the 1971 war, the president and prime minister were Hindus, the chief of the Army was a Parsi Zoroastrian, the Eastern Army commander who led operations against Pakistan was a Sikh, and his chief of staff was a Jew.

10. In 1984 an Indian diplomat was kidnapped and murdered in Birmingham, England, by British Kashmiri separatists when the Indian government refused to release Maqbool Bhat (who was charged with murder and hijacking of an Indian aircraft to Lahore in 1971). In 1989, the daughter of a senior Kashmiri minister was kidnapped and released after demands were met by India. In 1991, seven Israelis and one Dutch woman were kidnapped in Srinagar; one was killed, one went missing while trying to escape, two women were released by the terrorists, and the rest eventually escaped. In 1991, two Swedish engineers were kidnapped from the Uri hydroelectric project; they managed to escape three months later. In 1994, four Western tourists were kidnapped in Delhi and rescued by Indian police, who also captured kidnapper Omar Saeed Sheikh. Sheikh was released by India in December 1999 (during the IC 814 hijacking negotiations) and went to Pakistan, where he was later convicted for the killing of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl. In 1995, six Western tourists were kidnapped in Kashmir; one was beheaded, one escaped, and the remaining were eventually killed.

11. After landing in Amritsar, Lahore, and Dubai, the plane finally landed in Kandahar in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. After prolonged negotiations, the Indian government was forced to hand over three hard-core Pakistani terrorists held in Indian jails in exchange for the safe return of the aircraft and the passengers/crew. Unfortunately, one passenger was killed in Dubai, but the rest were set free. Several years later, two of the released terrorists were connected to the 2002 killing of Daniel Pearl (including Omar Saeed Sheikh), and the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001 (Maulana Masood Azhar-became founder of Jaish-e-Muhammad terrorist group), and other terrorist activities.

12. Several books and papers have now been written on the 2008 Mumbai attacks. This is a subject by itself. For example see, K. Alan Kronstadt, *Terrorist Attacks in Mumbai: Picking Up the Pieces*, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R40087.pdf>; *Terrorist Attacks in Mumbai, India, and Implications for US Interests*, Congressional Research Service, December 19, 2008, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R40087.pdf>; Sebastian Rotella, "Pakistan's Terror Connections," ProPublica, January 24, 2013, <http://www.propublica.org/topic/mumbai-terror-attacks/>.

13. For some of the lessons learned see Yonah Alexander, ed., *Combating Terrorism: Strategies of Ten Countries* (New Delhi: Manas Publications, 2003).

14. Also, see Arjun Subramaniam, "Challenges of Protecting India from Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24 (2012): 316–414.

15. Figures compiled from Annual Reports of the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1999–2006.

16. "Highest-Ever Voter Turnout Recorded in 2014 Polls, Government Spending Doubled since 2009," *Times of India*, May 13, 2014.

17. Mahim Pratap Singh, "J&K Records Historic Polling Percentage," *The Hindu*, December 21, 2014, <http://www.thehindu.com/elections/assembly2014/jammu-and-kashmir-records-historic-polling-percentage-ec/article6711311.ece?ref=sliderNews>.

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20. See Sandeep Unnithan, "Guns and Roses—Surgical Strikes: Indian Army's New Doctrine for Sub-conventional Operations," *India Today*, January 22, 2007, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/surgical-strikes-armys-new-method-to-deal-scos/1/156565.html>.

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22. Ephraim Inbar, "Indo-Israeli Defense Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century," Mideast Security and Policy Studies No. 93 (Ramat Gan, Israel: Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies Bar-Ilan University, 2012), and "Sisters in Arms: The Burgeoning Defense Trade between Israel and India," *Haaretz*, August 13, 2014.

23. For a copy of the policy guidelines see Government of Jammu and Kashmir Home Department, Rehabilitation Policy, January 31, 2004 at http://mha.nic.in/hindi/sites/upload_files/mhahindi/files/pdf/JK-RehabilitationPolicy.pdf.

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30. See Vivek Chada, ed., *Armed Forces Special Powers Act—The Debate*, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) Monograph series No. 7, November 2011.

31. See "In 20 Years 124 Army Men Held Guilty of Rights Violations in Jammu & Kashmir," *Times of India*, December 9, 2013; and "Human Rights and the Northern Army," <http://indianarmy.gov.in/Site/FormTemplate/frmTempSimple.aspx?MnId=cEUJWM5pZKFoVXjWTChPHg==&ParentID=Si4nTQ6g7ISlu+UYn1YfKA>.

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44. This has been suggested many times in the past by India but rejected by Pakistan. It has been reported that the same was suggested during the Simla Agreement in 1972 between Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, but Prime Minister Bhutto stated that it would be political suicide to do so on the heels of the disastrous Pakistani defeat in East Pakistan. Also see Jasjit Singh, "The Line of Control as Border," *World Focus*, October–December 2002.

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Capturing Khalid Sheikh Mohammad

Robert N. Wesley

THE FIGHT AGAINST AL QAEDA AND ITS affiliates has produced a mixture of successes and frustrated efforts since its post-9/11 reinvigoration. One of the highest priorities of the United States' counterterrorism strategy has been the capture or killing of the movement's traditional leadership. Indeed, through the concerted efforts of allied intelligence and security forces, the organization's top ranks have been in perpetual need of replenishing. Some of these achievements have been in the form of assassinations on hard targets. However, arguably the more significant successes were when U.S. officers—working with local security services—were able to actually capture high-ranking Al Qaeda operatives alive.

One such success involved a March 3, 2003, raid in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi. Acting on intelligence generated from a string of raids stretching over a year, scores of Pakistani paramilitaries raided an apartment building in an upscale section of Rawalpindi, awakening the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks on the United States. Khalid Sheikh Mohammad (widely referred to by his initials KSM)—the most important catch during that period of the fight against Al Qaeda-inspired terrorism—was taken without a fight, carrying with him some of the details of the inner workings, history, and future operations of the network.

The most significant capture of an Al Qaeda operational leader deserves to be detailed, not only for the strategic importance of the individual involved, but for delineating the complex process that led to his detainment and the lessons underlined by this process. His capture serves to emphasize one of the ways the United States has operated to ensure continued progress in disrupting both the traditional leadership and those who replace them.

Mohammad's case study allows for reflection on several counterterrorism issues that have had an impact on this conflict since his capture. These include, *inter alia*, the importance of developing strong international partnerships; harnessing the core competencies of joint operations involving U.S. and host-country organizations; creating and exploiting actionable intelligence; identifying and provoking security mistakes by Al Qaeda operatives; and targeting "partner organizations" of Al Qaeda.

The Mastermind

Although this case study will focus on the lessons learned from the counterterrorism perspective, the content of Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's background is significant enough to merit further elaboration. Mohammad was not an ordinary operative; nor was he a mediocre leader. He had a hand in so many of the most significant attacks preceding his arrest, including both World Trade Center (WTC) attacks, that some counterterrorism officials jokingly referred to him as the "Forrest Gump" of Al Qaeda. His insatiable appetite for the spectacular, and being the most experienced executor of attacks, elevated his detainment to the highest priority. Hence his capture on March 3, 2003, put Al Qaeda's most accomplished operational leader out of business. As Al Qaeda and its broader movement have become more laterally structured and loosely coordinated, such capable, independent-minded leaders are of the utmost importance in terms of executing complex terrorist attacks.

Mohammad is thought to have been born in 1964 or 1965 in Kuwait to parents likely from Baluchistan, an area covering parts of Pakistan and Iran.¹ Mohammad's experiences and natural attributes made him an exceptionally well-endowed operative. His mixed heritage, along with his Western education and travelling, account for his being fluent in at least Arabic, English, Urdu, and Baluchi. These languages allowed him to operate in disparate environments, freely moving about under multiple covers.

One of the common denominators of Al Qaeda's core leadership is that most grew up in what can be considered religious families.² Mohammad is no exception, and it is believed that he joined a sect of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait around age 16.³ From this foundation, he was inculcated in violent jihad from an early age, even participating in desert training encampments. After finishing his secondary schooling, Mohammad decided to venture to the United States for a Western university education and enrolled in a small Baptist college in North Carolina in 1983.⁴ After pursuing mechanical engineering, he transferred to North Carolina Agriculture and

Technology University and finished his degree in 1986.⁵ His religious fervor never seems to have weakened over the years, as he was constantly engaged in jihadi activities, even while simultaneously pursuing unrelated objectives. His radicalization was further galvanized after travelling to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets in 1987.⁶

In Afghanistan, Mohammad confided in Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a leading Afghan resistance figure and head of the Islamic Union Party (*Hizbul-Ittihad al-Islami*). From 1988 to 1992, Mohammad was engaged in, among other hobbies, helping to run a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Peshawar, Pakistan. The NGO was sponsored by his mentor Sayyaf, and was involved in facilitating travel and other support to mujahideen wishing to join the Afghan jihad. During this period, Mohammad's network of associates grew significantly. After leaving the NGO, Mohammad—like many career mujahideen—spent some time fighting and supporting the Bosnian jihad. Mohammad's nephew, Ramzi Yousef, was at this time planning the first WTC bombing. The two relatives were in communication, and indeed Mohammad wired Yousef US\$660 for the operation.⁷

By the time of the first WTC bombing in 1993, Mohammad had moved to Qatar and taken a position as an engineer at the Qatari Ministry of Electricity and Water, following the advice of Sheikh Abdallah bin Khalid bin Hamad al-Thani, the former Qatari minister of Islamic affairs.⁸ This was not a “settling-down” period for Mohammad; rather, it was a time for realigning his path of jihad. Apparently inspired by the near success of the WTC attack, Mohammad moved with its mastermind, his nephew Yousef, to the Philippines to plan further grandiose attacks.⁹ While in Manila, a plan was hatched that would be the inspiration for the 9/11 attacks.

The widely known but failed Yousef-Mohammad plot to blow up 11–12 airliners over the Pacific Ocean (a plot they referred to as “Oplan Bojinka”) was in the final planning stages when it was disrupted.¹⁰ An explosives accident in Manila, along with investigations of other attack plans, led to the disruption of the cell and the subsequent return of Mohammad to Qatar, where he regained his government position while clandestinely globetrotting to meet with associates in Sudan, Malaysia, Brazil, and Yemen.¹¹

Simultaneously, a U.S. court indicted Mohammad in January 1996 for his involvement in the first WTC bombing. U.S. authorities were also tracking Mohammad during this period and were hoping to arrest him and transport him to face trial. After learning of his residence in Qatar, U.S. officials debated whether to snatch Mohammad by force, eventually deciding to request permission from the Qatari government. Unfortunately, however, the response from Qatar came too late, as Mohammad had already fled to Pakistan to seek refuge with brothers in the region.¹²

Later in 1996, Mohammad, needing financing and operatives, was able to meet with Osama bin Laden, where he proposed to train pilots for a plan that involved crashing airplanes into buildings on the East and West coasts of the United States. Bin Laden reportedly was not particularly interested in pursuing the plan at the time as he had recently moved from Sudan to Afghanistan and was assumedly more concerned with reorganizing and consolidating his position in the chaotic region.¹³

The roaming Mohammad was also trying to find his jihadi niche, and thus became enamored with jihadi training camps and supporting groups operating in the region and beyond. Mohammad moved his family to Karachi, Pakistan, in 1997. Later the same year, he tried to join Ibn al-Khattab, the famous Saudi militant leader in Chechnya, but failed to transit through Azerbaijan. During this period, Mohammad maintained his ties to Al Qaeda's operatives, including Mohammad Atef and Sayf al-Adl, assisting them in various projects. These relationships flourished until Bin Laden in late 1998 or early 1999 gave Mohammad the go-ahead for the "planes operation," and the 9/11 plot began in earnest.¹⁴

As the 9/11 attacks have been detailed in other publications, this study will only emphasize that Mohammad was the operational leader, the strategic guide, and the overall commander of the operation. It is also important to note that Mohammad had not sworn an official oath of allegiance, *bay'ah*, to Bin Laden, and thus preserved his autonomy for the coming years. Mohammad, conforming to his modus operandi, was also engaged in simultaneous planning for further operations, as the "planes operation" was viewed as the beginning of a protracted campaign. Following the surprising success of the operation, the hunt for Mohammad, which had been initiated in the mid-1990s, accelerated.

Capturing the Forrest Gump of Al Qaeda

Mohammad, like many Al Qaeda operatives with previous knowledge of the attacks, expressed surprise at the magnitude of the destruction on 9/11. Correspondingly, the strength and determination of the U.S. response to the attacks seems to also have caught leaders such as Mohammad off guard. However, Mohammad's role in the attacks did not become clear until 2002, when interrogations—especially of Al Qaeda senior leader Abu Zubaydah—revealed Mohammad to have been the primary organizer.¹⁵

Even though Al Qaeda's operational environment was being constantly restricted after the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan and the strengthening of cooperation with the government of Pakistan, the network continued to

plan future attacks and reevaluate existing plans. For example, the 9/11 attacks were to be followed by a “second wave” of attacks in the United States by operatives such as Zacarias Moussaoui.¹⁶ The “second wave” plans seemed to have been postponed or cancelled following intense counterterrorism operations and the arrest of Moussaoui. Nonetheless, Mohammad pushed on with multiple operations.

On September 10, 2001, the same day that the Northern Alliance leader Ahmed Massoud was assassinated by Al Qaeda operatives in Northern Afghanistan, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad dispatched his trusted operative Mohammad Mansor Jabarah to Southeast Asia to lay the groundwork for multiple suicide truck bombings in the region targeting U.S., British, and Israeli interests.¹⁷ This operation was reportedly frustrated in December 2001 after the cell in Singapore was dismantled.¹⁸

A week after the 9/11 attacks, Mohammad is reported to have traveled from his base in Pakistan to Afghanistan to seek out Bin Laden, who congratulated Mohammad and instructed him to continue operations with increasing autonomy.¹⁹ Mohammed responded by delegating operational authorities to subordinates and sanctioning further attacks. One such move involved giving US\$20,000 and a fake passport to Jemaah Islamiya senior operative Riduan Isamuddin, commonly known as Hambali, with instructions to case targets in the region for further attacks.²⁰ Mohammad is also believed to have had a hand in the April 2002 attack on a synagogue in Jerba, Tunisia, which claimed the lives of 19 people.²¹

In the early stages of the U.S. and allied campaign against the Al Qaeda organization and its networks, both sides were caught trying to come to grips with what had happened and what the future direction of the conflict would be. Al Qaeda's cadres began to seek out refuges for regrouping and continuing operations. Mohammad seems to have decided that utilizing the numerous contacts and affiliates he had collected over the years in Pakistan's cities was the wisest method of evading capture while planning future attacks.

Pakistan's cities are teeming with numerous militant groups of all varieties, and Mohammad had connections with operatives and facilitators throughout many of them. One of the most familiar cities to him was Karachi. A huge port city with a population of over 14 million, Karachi offered Mohammad easy access to people, materials, and numerous safe houses from which to evade counterterrorism initiatives. Militant groups have long had a heavy presence in the city, and support networks sympathetic to Al Qaeda and Mohammad were well entrenched. The negative side of taking refuge in Karachi, however, was that it was swarming with intelligence officers and agents. Unlike the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan, any neighborhood in Karachi could be easily accessed within

a moment's notice. Mohammad undoubtedly weighed these advantages and disadvantages, and in the end decided that Karachi was a beneficial place from which to operate.

The city of Karachi was a primary suspect for the location of Mohammad due to his previous residencies there coupled with the known presence of Al Qaeda operatives in the city. However, in late 2001 and early 2002, Mohammad's location was still unclear, and indeed the priority of his capture had not yet fully matured. Later in 2002, it became known that Mohammad, Khalid bin Atish, and probably Ramzi bin al-Shibh as well had been hiding in Karachi since at least January 2002. This information was partially based on subsequent raids where it was discovered that Atish had been giving lectures in January and February 2002 to local militants, primarily from the violent sectarian group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).²²

Much information is not publicly known concerning Mohammad's movements or counterterrorism activities targeting him in the early months of 2002; however, it can be assumed that since both groups were in a perpetual state of operations, there was much occurring in this respect. Indeed, the Jerba synagogue bombing occurred in April of 2002, thus emphasizing Mohammad's continued relevance. Meanwhile, the U.S. and allied intelligence agencies were in need of more specific information on Mohammad's whereabouts in order to focus their resources.

The break that investigators had been searching for occurred after Al Jazeera investigative reporter Yosri Fouda received an invitation from Al Qaeda to conduct an interview in June 2002. Fouda arrived in Karachi and was escorted on a series of well-orchestrated countersurveillance procedures before reaching a residence where he met two of the primary planners of the 9/11 attacks: Khalid Sheikh Mohammad and Ramzi bin al-Shibh.²³

Eager to take credit for the attacks and to voice their justifications, opinions, and goals, the two senior operatives proceeded over the next two days to outline the attacks and impress their ideology upon Fouda. This was the turning point in the hunt for Khalid Sheikh Mohammad.

The importance of the interview rested not in the rhetoric of the two planners, but rather in how the circumstances of the interview were exploited. The first mistake made by Mohammad was allowing the interview to take place in the same city, regardless of its size, as where he was in long-term hiding. Fouda was able to identify the sequence of events of his escort to the safe house and determine that he was conducting the interview in Karachi. This enabled joint Pakistani-U.S. tracking teams to focus their immediate energies on the city where they knew he had been hiding.

After finishing the interview, Fouda was not able to return with any of the audio or video tapes that had been recording the two-day event.

Mohammad and Bin al-Shibh had claimed that they needed to black out their faces by their own technical means. Fouda was promised the videotapes but never received them. After some time, Mohammad made his second mistake by allowing an audio recording of the interview to be sent to Fouda as documentation. This recording now allowed U.S. signals intelligence (SIGINT) technicians to develop a “voiceprint” of both Al Qaeda operatives. These prints enabled U.S. agencies to monitor telecommunications transmissions for matching voice patterns with the hope of further isolating Mohammad or Bin al-Shibh’s location. From this point, the man-hunt began to pick up momentum.

One of the most successful ways of tracking down the location of leadership figures such as Mohammad is by producing “actionable” intelligence based on information gleaned from interrogations and clues collected in raids of individuals who could be in close proximity to the leader in question.²⁴ This intelligence must be exploited quickly, as Al Qaeda’s leaders—although making mistakes at times—tend to practice effective personal security procedures. The trail usually dries up quickly, and thus U.S. and Pakistani joint teams must work in fluid cooperation in order to harness their core competencies and maintain production of this actionable intelligence.

The period between the Fouda interview and September 2002 saw multiple low-level raids and intelligence collection activities focused on uncovering new leads in Karachi. One such raid netted Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan, a Kenyan national wanted for his participation in the 1998 embassy bombings. His arrest is reported to have come as the result of information retrieved from the interrogation of members of a sectarian group in Karachi, most likely from Laskar-e-Jhangvi.²⁵

A series of raids conducted in September 2002 were the most considerable to date. The most significant of these began on September 9, when two foreigners and a Pakistani were arrested in a Karachi apartment. The suspects reportedly told investigators of two apartments in the Defense Housing district of Karachi that were purported to contain additional militants.²⁶ Investigators were also chasing down the location of a satellite phone call that was thought to have matched Mohammad’s voiceprint.²⁷ U.S. and Pakistani teams were generating actionable intelligence that was encouragingly pointing to the location of Mohammad.

The following day on September 10, Pakistani officers raided two apartments in the Bahadurabad neighborhood. The terrorists contested the raid with automatic weapons and grenades, which led to the death of two of their comrades and the capture of five. Inside the apartments, investigators found satellite and mobile phones, laptop computers, CDs, US\$5,000 and other valuable materials that required immediate attention. Mohammad

was apparently a frequent visitor of the raided safe houses.²⁸ Interrogations of suspects and individuals in and around the apartment directed the joint teams to another apartment in a run-down business district of Karachi. Pakistani Interservice Intelligence (ISI) paramilitaries raided this apartment on September 11, 2002. On the one-year anniversary of the attacks on the United States, one of the leading perpetrators was captured.²⁹

Ramzi bin al-Shibh had essentially become Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's proverbial right-hand man. The former roommate of Mohammad Atta, the tactical emir of the 9/11 attacks, Bin al-Shibh was initially meant to take part in the attacks, but could not gain the proper visa to enter the United States.³⁰ He thus became a primary facilitator and organizer for the 9/11 attack group. Excelling in this role, he became even closer to KSM, and began taking leading positions in further operations. He even participated in refining the ideological justifications of Al Qaeda's campaign.³¹ Although ISI officials and U.S. intelligence officers might have been surprised to have discovered Bin al-Shibh instead of KSM during the September 11, 2002, raid, they no doubt knew they had caught a substantial figure with serious implications for future operations. Indeed, KSM referred to Bin al-Shibh as the "Coordinator of the Holy Tuesday Operation" in their joint interview with Fouda.

The September 11, 2002, raid not only captured Bin al-Shibh but also provided new intelligence on the activities of KSM and his associates. Authorities expected to find KSM and Khalid bin Atish at the apartment, and indeed they probably had been staying there previously, as Atish's artificial leg was found in one of the rooms.³² Other materials indicated to investigators that some of those who were operating out of the safe house were involved in facilitating the foreign travel of Al Qaeda operatives in Pakistan wishing to exit the country.³³ Also present were the usual assortment of phones, computers, documents, CDs, and money.³⁴

Investigators exploited the intelligence gleaned from the previous raids to conduct yet a third raid, the next day on September 12 in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal district of Karachi.³⁵ The raid captured seven suspects, including an Egyptian woman who reportedly told investigators that KSM had stayed in the building several times during the preceding weeks. Mohammad was clearly moving often from one safe house to another, and would receive news of the compromised refuges in very short order. However, Mohammad was still believed at this time to be in Karachi. Subsequent raids the week of November 14, 2002, led to the capture of eight Al Qaeda suspects, although Mohammad was not among them.³⁶

Joint U.S. and Pakistani teams were tracking leads generated since September all over Pakistan. In Lahore, a joint ISI and U.S. team conducted a

midnight raid on the Manawan compound owned by the prominent Dr. Ahmed Javed Khawaja. The doctor was found to be harboring Al Qaeda operatives identified as Abu Yasir al-Jaziri, Assadullah Aziz, Sheikh Said al-Misri, and Abu Faraj. Khawaja was the third known Pakistani doctor to have been arrested since September 2002. Abu Faraj was reportedly also known to have been a deputy of Mohammad.³⁷

The first month of 2003 brought another wave of important raids targeting Mohammad and his associates. ISI agents raided the compound of a highly visible female leader of the Jama'at-e-Islami political party in the Gulshan-e-Maymar neighborhood of Karachi on January 9.³⁸ She was the wife of the famous Pakistani field hockey player Shahid Ali Khan. In addition, the raid led to the arrest of two Arab members of Al Qaeda and information that could be exploited for future operations.³⁹ After a gun battle the next day in Gulshan-e-Maima district, another raid netted suspected Al Qaeda operatives Abu Omar and Abu Hamza.⁴⁰ Investigators also uncovered weapons, mobile phones, computers, and US\$25,000 in cash.⁴¹

On January 17, 2003, investigators identified four safe houses and captured four suspected Al Qaeda operatives with links to Mohammad and the banned group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.⁴² An Australian citizen was also arrested during January and questioned regarding his links to Mohammad.⁴³ Investigators had started slowly identifying the network of supporters who were facilitating Mohammad's movements or were otherwise linked to him. They were getting the kind of actionable intelligence that was necessary for breaking up a network and capturing its members.

The arduous process of pursuing leads and finding dead ends, frustrated near misses, big catches, and sleepless hours came to a climax starting in February 2003, when a combination of investigative techniques and intelligence collection methods—and possibly the reward money offered by the United States—resulted in the arrest of Mohammad Abd al-Rahman, a son of the infamous Omar Abd al-Rahman imprisoned in the United States.⁴⁴ Al-Rahman was arrested on February 14 in the Pakistani city of Quetta. It is reported that al-Rahman divulged valuable details about KSM, with whom he had purportedly been hiding.⁴⁵ U.S. technicians were also able to exploit the materials that were left behind in the Quetta compound to trace previous communications to individuals with whom KSM might have sought refuge.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's trail was picked up again in Rawalpindi, and the ISI—with the support of the United States—employed surveillance and stalking techniques to arrest at least seven individuals associated with Mohammad. Mohammad had apparently been staying for 10 days with Ahmed Abdul Qadus, the son of an eminent microbiologist in the city

with links to the Jama'at-e-Islami political group.⁴⁶ Mohammad was caught sleeping when officers raided the house in the early morning of March 3, 2003.

Arrested along with Mohammad and Qadus was Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsawi, a trusted associate of Mohammad who had, among other activities, facilitated finances for the 9/11 operation.⁴⁷ Mohammad was quickly interrogated for more actionable intelligence and then handed over to U.S. officials to be flown out of the country for more extensive, long-term interrogations. After an arduous process, less than a year after the Fouda interview, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks was captured along with dozens of other highly experienced associates.

Lessons Learned

Such a robust and protracted counterterrorism project can provide insights as to how counterterrorism has been practiced in the past, and how it could be effectively practiced in the future. This chapter focuses on five of these lessons, which are in many respects interdependent of one another, since the failure to accomplish one can lead to the marginal benefits of another. A successful counterterrorism campaign, as demonstrated by the KSM case study, will display a positive incorporation of these lessons.

1) International Partnering Relationships

Probably the most glaring lesson that this case study of KSM illuminates is the necessity of building strong, trusting relationships between the country hosting the operations—in this case Pakistan—and the other involved parties, such as the United States. This cooperation must be comprehensive, affecting all levels of government from the policymakers to the working-level operators collecting intelligence and conducting raids.

Al Qaeda and those following a similar philosophy and terrorist strategy are a danger to all states. Most major counterterrorism operations that have involved targeting leadership have been the result of bilateral or multilateral cooperation. Mohammad would have continued to elude capture if the vested countries had pursued the hunt unilaterally. The necessity of close cooperation cannot be understated.

2) Synergy and Core Competencies

Closely connected to the development of international partnering relationships is defining and exploiting the core competencies of working-

level officers and agencies. Developing a synergy of strengths is crucial to breaking highly adaptive and loosely connected networks such as Al Qaeda. Capturing the leadership, which is even more evasive, requires the optimizing of joint operations to develop the necessary actionable intelligence.

Pakistan exhibited strengths, or core competencies, in the area of human intelligence (HUMINT); local knowledge; human capital; national and local police capabilities; and the authority to raid, detain, and interrogate suspects. The United States added refined investigative techniques such as surveillance and stalking; advanced analytical tools; additional HUMINT resources; and unique SIGINT capabilities, all of which complemented the core competencies of its Pakistani partner.

3) Creating and Exploiting Actionable Intelligence

Mohammad did not suffer the same fate as his nephew Ramzi Yousef, who was captured as a result of one of his associates walking into the U.S. Embassy and leading U.S. and Pakistani officers to his location. Rather, Mohammad was captured as a direct result of months of the tireless joint efforts of Pakistani and U.S. intelligence and police officers who created their own “lucky breaks” by exploiting one piece of intelligence information to cause another to appear. Although joint operations are usually far from displaying perfect synergy, the competencies harnessed by the teams involved in the hunt for Khalid Sheikh Mohammad allowed for a continual production of actionable intelligence.

Terrorist groups under the strain of counterterrorism operations continuously adjust their security procedures. They also learn to compartmentalize information in order to insulate themselves when colleagues are detained and safe houses are raided. Although this tradecraft is becoming highly advanced, it is permeable, and thus synergetic exploitation teams are necessary to maintain production of actionable intelligence.

4) Need to Identify and Provoke Mistakes

Most terrorist leaders are well practiced in covert tradecraft, and have proven to be adept at insulating themselves from detection and capture. Intelligence collection and counterterrorism operations can place significant pressures on leaders, which in turn constricts their operational capabilities, but may not necessarily lead to capture. However, terrorists cannot solely concentrate on evading detection, as they must remain relevant by interacting with their audiences and continuing operations. Terrorists can

make mistakes when they engage in these necessary activities, and these mistakes can be exploited.

In this case study, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad was an operational commander who mistakenly decided to dabble in public relations. Mohammad exposed his location and later his voice to an exogenous source. Al Qaeda leaders have since learned of the danger of inviting journalists for interviews, and thus now produce their propaganda indigenously in order to maintain full control of the information released. After Mohammad unnecessarily exposed himself, U.S. and Pakistani intelligence agencies were able to pick up his trail. Since KSM was the chief operational commander, he had to maintain active communications and access to personnel, which further exposed him to SIGNIT activities and Karachi-focused counterterrorism operations.

Such mistakes will eventually occur when pressure is applied, but they can also happen by chance, as this case depicts. An intimate understanding of the necessary activities and objectives of terrorist leadership can allow pressure to be applied more effectively to induce more mistakes.

5) Targeting Partner Organizations

The idea of targeting organizations that support or are otherwise connected to terrorist groups is not a novel concept. This case study serves to underline the fact that rolling up complex and amorphous networks such as Al Qaeda requires targeting the groups that can provide an actionable intelligence “cascade” or a piece of information that leads to another, thus developing a trail that can be followed toward more significant targets.

An example of this is the tangential relationships between Al Qaeda members and the LeJ. The two groups shared resources and facilitated movement for each other in Karachi, and indeed vital information gathered in the KSM case came from the LeJ. Jama’at-e-Islami, another group in this case study with links to Al Qaeda, is a bit more difficult to target due to the size of the political party and the backlash major investigations might have. However, directly targeting groups with less potential political backlash such as the LeJ, with the goal of obtaining information on Al Qaeda in Karachi, can produce real results.

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The Madrid Attacks on March 11

An Analysis of the Jihadist Threat in Spain and Main Counterterrorist Measures

Rogelio Alonso

THIS CHAPTER WILL ANALYZE THE WORST TERRORIST attack ever suffered by Spain, on March 11, 2004. On that day, 10 bombs planted in four different trains filled with thousands of commuters on their way to Madrid were detonated between 7:37 and 7:40 A.M., killing 191 people. Although Spain had been constantly targeted by various types of terrorism since the late 1960s, violence from the ethno-nationalist Basque terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA, Basque Fatherland and Freedom) being by far the most intense, never before had a terrorist attack in the country been so indiscriminate and lethal. Both characteristics showed that the way in which the terrorist attack was perpetrated did not represent the traditional *modus operandi* of ETA. As it would soon emerge, the killings on March 11 were carried out by a group of Islamist terrorists, some of whom were closely linked to individuals who were also part of the Al Qaeda network.¹ The chapter will look at the events that led to this terrorist attack, analyzing how and why such an atrocity was perpetrated, as well as its implications for counterterrorism in the country. The main measures implemented as a response to this tragedy will also be described and assessed.

The Background and Aftermath of the March 11 Attacks

The terrorist attacks perpetrated in Madrid on that day and the collective suicide of seven of those responsible for them weeks later, on April 3, 2004—when Spanish police surrounded the apartment where some of the men involved in the March 11 explosions were hiding—exposed the prominence that the jihadist movement had reached in the country. Spain, which as far back as 2001 had been described by Italian judicial authorities as the “main base of Al Qaeda in Europe”² as a result of the activities of Islamist radicals during the previous decade, had also become a target of violence. The evolution of jihadism demonstrated the extent to which the country had become a hub for the recruitment and radicalization of individuals prepared to commit terrorist attacks in Spain and further away. In order to understand the rationale of an attack like the one perpetrated in Madrid it is important to stress that the Al Qaeda network in Spain had been involved in different terrorist activities since the mid- to late 1990s that were mainly oriented toward other countries. Spain was initially regarded as a valuable base for logistical and infrastructure support, to the point of being described as “one of the favorite sanctuaries” of Islamist terrorists,³ but not as a target of violence itself. It was during that period that different activists, some of whom would be later sentenced for membership and collaboration with a terrorist organization, engaged in the indoctrination and radicalization of other individuals, as well as in the financing of terrorist cells in several countries throughout the world, and the recruiting of mujahideen in order to send them to conflict spots such as Bosnia, Chechnya, Indonesia, and Afghanistan. Therefore, March 11 exposed a significant shift in the terrorist strategy, since Spain itself had for the first time become a target.

Some observers find a direct cause-effect relation between the Iraq conflict and this change in the scene. The fact that the terrorist attacks took place three days before a general election in the country has led to speculation about the likely intentions of the terrorists. Contrary to extended opinion, however, no evidence has emerged yet to prove that those responsible for the March 11 attack aimed at destabilizing the government or even influencing the nation’s vote in order to damage the party in power at the time, which had supported the military intervention in Iraq.⁴ In fact, the relationship between electoral processes and terrorism is not uncommon, with previous experiences demonstrating that very often the outcome of terrorists attacks does not fulfill the expectations of those behind them since violence can be—and sometimes is—counterproductive for those who perpetrate it.⁵ It is reasonable to argue that if the Spanish government

at the time of the March 11 attacks had responded in a different way, avoiding certain mistakes made in the management of the crisis, the electoral results could have been different.⁶ Therefore, two points can be made. First, it is not possible to establish that the terrorists' main motivation was to punish the Spanish government for its involvement in the Iraq war. Second, even if this had been the terrorists' intention, the final outcome was determined not only by the attack itself but also by the government's response to it. In other words, the fact that a different response could have strengthened the Spanish government at such a critical time puts into question that the terrorist intention was to change the sign of the election.⁷

Instead of Iraq, another issue may have acted as a stronger motivational factor for those behind the terrorist acts described here and the ones—some of them of a suicide type—that were planned to follow but did not materialize as a result of subsequent police successes. The major setback suffered by the network of Islamist terrorists in Spain, when at the end of 2001 key figures were arrested by Spanish police, was probably a decisive variable. Such a strike against the infrastructure of the terrorist network may have triggered a strong feeling of revenge that would have materialized in the terrorist campaign initiated in 2004.⁸ It should be stressed that the March 11 attack was not a “one off” from the terrorists' point of view. The bombs on that day constituted the beginning of a campaign that was intended to continue weeks afterward, but was cut short as a result of the security forces' successes that led to the siege of seven of the terrorists in the suburb of Leganés, located in the outskirts of Madrid, and their collective suicide. The fact that the socialist José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the new Spanish prime minister elected on March 14, had decided to pull out the troops from Iraq did not deter the terrorists from planning more attacks after his election victory. In fact, as police and judicial investigations have confirmed, the arrest of several relatives of some of those directly involved in organizing and perpetrating the attacks two weeks later led the terrorists to threaten the government with more attacks. The threats issued by the terrorist cell in the aftermath of these detentions are seen by investigators as directly related to those arrests, which were explicitly mentioned and criticized in a video recording. The contents of the tape proved quite revealing of the fanatical rationale of the terrorists, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

Two weeks after our blessed incursion in *Mayrit*⁹ and following your new ruler's declaration of intent to inaugurate his mandate maintaining his combat against Muslims by sending more of the soldiers of the cross to Afghanistan, the death brigade of Al Ansar al Qaeda [the supporters of Al Qaeda]

announces that we are continuing the path of our blessed jihad until the defeat of all of those who may consider following Bush's example of combating Muslims in the name of the war against terrorism. Therefore, the brigade in the land of Al Andalus has decided not to leave the territory until their soldiers have been taken from the lands of Muslims immediately and unconditionally. If they didn't do it in a week's time from today we will keep our jihad until we fall as martyrs in the land of Tareq ben Ziad.¹⁰ You must know that you will never be safe and that Bush and his administration will only bring you destruction. We will kill you at any time and place. We will not distinguish between the military and civilians. Thousands of our innocents die in Afghanistan and Iraq. Is your blood more valuable than ours?¹¹

Directly addressing those Muslims who would also die in the indiscriminate attacks contemplated in such a threat, the terrorists went on to justify their killings as follows:

You know the grudge that the Spain of the Crusades holds against Muslims. The history of Al Andalus and the inquisition is not far. We are very sorry for the injustices you suffer but our jihad is above anything else because our brothers suffer death and destruction. Those who are afraid of being killed or involved must leave before the week's deadline set before the truce expires.¹²

The threats did materialize, and on April 2, 2004, an explosive device was found at the railway line in the province of Toledo, near Madrid. As it would be later revealed, the fingerprints of Anwar Asrih Rifaat, one of the suicide terrorists, were found in the plastic bag containing the explosives that seemed aimed at derailing one of the high-speed trains on the Madrid-Seville route. The finding confirmed that, as police feared, the cell responsible for March 11 had planned more attacks. Other discoveries would confirm, too, that suicide attacks in the country were also contemplated by the terrorists. In the meantime, Spanish police had managed to locate some of the terrorist suspects. One of the bags that failed to explode on March 11 proved decisive in the police investigations, leading to some arrests two days after the attacks. Jamal Zougam was the first person to be detained. A Moroccan born in Tangier in 1974, he had lived in Spain for 20 years, where he had caught the attention of Spanish police. His name appeared in the judicial report written by Judge Baltasar Garzón in 2002 after the arrest of Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas, alias Abu Dahdah, regarded as the leader of Al Qaeda in Spain.¹³ As a result of the investigations conducted at that time, Zougam's surveillance demonstrated he had regularly offered assistance to Al Qaeda individuals.

Jamal Zougam was the person who bought the phone cards used to activate the cell phone detonators in the terrorist attack on March 11, and that would allow Spanish police to track down the rest of the members of the operational cell, most of whom were hidden in an apartment located in Leganés. On Saturday April 3, 2004, one day after the explosive device had been found at the railway line, police surrounded the building. One of the terrorists identified police officers outside the apartment, alerting the rest of the group before managing to escape from the scene. The terrorists initiated a shoot-out and the GEO (Grupo Especial de Operaciones), the special unit of the Spanish police trained for siege situations, was deployed. Two hours later, and after carefully assessing the situation, some members of the unit entered the building, taking positions right outside the apartment. As a member of the police squad who led the operation explained later, a small amount of explosives was placed outside the door by officers. Once the door was blown off, the police attempted to negotiate with the terrorists, but to no avail, since they continued shooting from inside while challenging the officers to come into the apartment. While the police outside were considering the use of tear gas, one of the terrorists announced they were sending an emissary who the police feared could be carrying explosives.¹⁴ It was at that point that a huge explosion was heard, resulting in the death of seven terrorists in the apartment, and killing one of the members of the special police squad. According to the attorney in charge of the case at the Spanish National Court, the terrorists only decided to kill themselves after realizing they were besieged with no prospect of escaping. As it was revealed by the search of the house in the aftermath of the explosion, the terrorists had detailed plans for future attacks that they were going to carry out beginning April 4, 2004. This was the deadline established in a statement written by one of the suicide terrorists, Sarhane Ben Abdelmajid Fakheth, nicknamed the Tunisian, that was sent to the Spanish daily *Abc*. The communiqué, signed by Abu Dujan Al Afgani in the name of "The Death Battalion," demanded the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and threatened with more attacks.¹⁵ As it was also found later on, the targets included two recreational centers frequented by Jewish families, and a British school, all in the Madrid area. Once again, the terrorists had opted for soft targets.

Religious Dimensions

The manner in which the terrorists claimed responsibility for the attacks on March 11, using a video recording released two days later, led the police and intelligence services to believe that a suicide attack was

definitely contemplated. The video showed a man dressed in a white gown with his face covered by a white sheet, wearing dark glasses and a hat with a banner behind his back in which some Arab words could be read: "There is no other God than Allah and Mohammad is his prophet." Armed with a 9-mm pistol, the terrorist read a statement that he claimed was "a warning from Al Qaeda's spokesperson in Europe, Abud Dujan Al Afgani." The terrorist, who was later identified as Rachid Oulad Akcha, one of the seven men who committed suicide on April 3, 2004, said: "This is a response to the crimes you have committed in the world, and particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, and there will be more if God so desires. . . . You want life and we want death. . . . If you don't stop your injustices there will be more and more blood. These attacks are very little compared to what may happen."¹⁶ According to Jorge Dezcallar, the director of the Spanish Center for National Intelligence (Centro Nacional de Inteligencia) at the time of the attack, the attire worn by the terrorist who claimed responsibility for March 11 was quite revealing. In his testimony to the Commission of Inquiry on March 11, Dezcallar emphasized that the video showed that the terrorist regarded himself as if he was already dead and, in his opinion, so it was with the rest of the group. "The problem is that if they haven't killed themselves yet, they are going to do it. They already regard themselves purified and on their way to paradise," Dezcallar added.¹⁷ As it has already been mentioned, only days before the suicide, on March 27, the group had recorded another video full of threats that was found after the explosion in Leganés. In this case, the video footage showed three terrorists who some sources have identified as three of the suicide terrorists, heavily armed, dressed in white gowns and with their faces covered by balaclavas. The three members of the self-named "Company of Death" appeared holding what resembled detonators connected to explosive devices that were attached to their bodies.

The radical neo-Salafist religious ideology of the seven men who killed themselves in Madrid was most certainly of great relevance to their behavior, since they were individuals already predisposed to suicide terrorism. This course of action was finally precipitated by factors such as the police siege of the apartment where they were hiding. According to the judiciary investigation, the terrorists intended to prevent the police from conducting future investigations that could result from their arrests and interrogations, and decided to end their lives while trying to kill as many policemen as possible. Some sources argue that their intention to kill policemen or other individuals was motivated by the fact that Islam prohibits suicide and, therefore, their act would be seen in a different light if those whom they regarded as infidels also died in the explosion. This point also

illustrates the rational and utilitarian nature of the reasoning behind their decision to kill themselves. The telephone conversations that some of them had with their relatives minutes before committing suicide, informing their families of their decision to kill themselves, demonstrates that their death was a deliberate act, revealing a combination of religious fanaticism and rational choice. The farewell letters left by some of the terrorists also strengthens this argument confirming their willingness to die.

One of the seven suicide terrorists, Abdennabi Kounjaa, nicknamed Abdallah, born in the Moroccan city of Taourit in 1975, wrote a “farewell letter” days before his suicide in which he thanked God for guiding him through the path he followed and assured his family that he had left them behind in Morocco because it was “a decision made by God almighty.” He demanded that his daughters not emigrate to “infidel” countries like Spain, which he described as “hell.” While addressing his daughters, Kounjaa asked them to follow the “mujahideen brothers throughout the world.” He went on to say: “I can’t put up with this life living like a weak and humiliated person under the scrutiny of the infidels and tyrants.” He also added that “this life is the path towards death,” thus preferring “death rather than life.” The letter concluded: “I hope you follow the words and deeds, the jihad in Islam, since it’s a full religion. Make Westerners your enemies. May God punish the tyrants.”¹⁸ Another letter found at the bomb site constitutes another “testament” by one of the suicide terrorists, in which he says goodbye to his “beloved mother, father, brothers, and sisters” and to all his “dearest comrades and Muslims in general.” He added: “I have chosen this path by my own will, the path of the prophets and those sent by Allah, because the time of humiliation and dishonor has reached its conclusion. To me, it’s more honorable to die dignified than to live humiliated while I see my brothers being slaughtered, murdered and arrested throughout the world while we survive like beasts.”¹⁹ Another unfinished letter—bearing similarities with the ones previously described—was also found at the Madrid apartment of Said Berraj, a terrorist suspect allegedly involved in the March 11 attacks who managed to escape police arrest.²⁰

The Investigation and Trial

In April 2006, Judge Juan del Olmo, the magistrate in charge of one of the most complicated cases in the protracted history of Spain’s fight against terrorism, was able to present charges against 29 suspects in relation to their involvement in March 11. Many of these men had already been under investigation prior to the massacre in Madrid, as part of other investigations related to Islamist terrorism and criminality. In fact, the judicial

investigation contained detailed transcriptions of telephone conversations of some of the suspects that were taped by Spanish police only days before the terrorist attack. Jamal Ahmidan (nicknamed the Chinese), born in Tetuan, Morocco, in October 28, 1970, was one of the activists under surveillance and the person who acquired the explosives used on March 11, exchanging them for drugs and a considerable amount of money. He also managed to acquire weapons and ammunition through his contacts in the Spanish criminal world developed since he got involved in petty crime and drug smuggling shortly after he entered Spain illegally in 1990. Police informants were able to provide information on some of the terrorists' movements prior to March 11, although limited human and material resources as well as important gaps in the coordination of different agencies prevented security forces at the time from conducting more intense and efficient surveillance of the suspects. In fact—as was acknowledged by leading figures in the Spanish government in charge of security at the time of the terrorist attacks—"mistakes" were definitely made,²¹ lapses that (as will be further analyzed later in this chapter) needed to be addressed in order to improve the country's capacity to prevent future terrorist attacks.

Internal notes produced by Spanish police reveal that their knowledge of some of the activities of the cell involved in the attack went as far back as October 2002.²² Up to 30 individuals involved in the attacks had been investigated separately by the Spanish intelligence service and police forces in advance of the attacks. Twenty of them had already been investigated in the course of investigations that led to the detention of key figures in the so-called Spanish cell of Al Qaeda in November 2001. Jamal Zougam, Sarhane Ben Abdelmagid Fakhel, and Allekema Lamari were among those investigated at that time. Lamari, one of the seven suicide terrorists, was considered a highly dangerous individual, to the point that the Spanish intelligence service warned four months before March 11 of the likelihood of him perpetrating an attack. In September 2003, a reliable source had informed the Spanish intelligence service that Lamari could be organizing a suicide terrorist attack. Lamari's willingness to perpetrate terrorist actions aimed at derailing trains or setting a forest on fire had already been mentioned months earlier by informers.²³ The Spanish Civil Guard (Guardia Civil) had two informers closely linked to members of the plot responsible for stealing considerable amounts of explosives in a mine located in Asturias, a northern Spanish region. This intelligence background allowed investigators to make significant progress in the immediate aftermath of the March 11 attacks, rapidly uncovering and dismantling the network of terrorists who took part in the attacks as well as those who collaborated in their preparation. The

analysis of phone conversations was one of the most useful pieces of the complex investigation that would finally enable investigators to explain in considerable detail how the terrorist attack was planned and perpetrated.

Paradoxically, although in 2002 the United States praised Spanish police successes against Al Qaeda, describing the country as a “champion” in the fight against Islamist terrorism,²⁴ security forces were in the end unable to prevent an attack whose overall cost has been estimated by police to be around 100,000 Euros (US\$126,380).²⁵ Although the country’s antiterrorist framework against the ETA had been improved over the years reaching a high degree of efficiency that managed to extremely weaken the Basque terrorist group, the same could not be said of the structures needed to properly combat the threat of Islamist terrorism, as acknowledged by one of the most prominent police authorities at the time who admitted that Spain was aware of a serious threat but lacked the resources to confront it successfully.²⁶ Such an awareness was complemented by José María Aznar’s statement in 2002 in which the then prime minister stressed the importance of the threat faced by the country, warning that “We all have to be prepared because we can all be targets since there are sleeping cells in all of our nations.”²⁷ These were not the only warnings vis-à-vis Islamist terrorism, as corroborated by Europol’s assessment of the situation in Spain, produced in October 2003, in which they indicated:

The various terrorist groups comprising the so-called “Islamic World Front” (under the leadership of Al Qaeda), as well as the advocates of internationalization of Jihad on a global scale, continue to pose the greatest threat to our interests as well as to the interests of the other EU Member States. The Spanish Government’s support of the military intervention in Iraq by the United States and its Allies constitutes without doubt a further risk factor for Spain, even though it might not be the most decisive or dangerous one.²⁸

The Government’s Responses to March 11

Spain’s protracted history of confronting violence perpetrated by the Basque nationalist terrorist group ETA has enabled the country to reach a high level of efficiency against this type of terrorism. Different measures implemented over the years provided ample experience that would be used in order to improve Spain’s capacities against a new brand of terrorism for which the country was not so well prepared by March 11. As mentioned earlier, the origins of jihadism in the country can be traced back to the previous decade when the first networks—composed mainly of

Algerian and Syrian individuals—started to settle down in Spain. Although police surveillance led to important successes at the turn of the century, efforts directed to counter Islamist terrorism at the time were considerably restricted given the limited amount of human and material resources available. The emergence and development of the threat since the 1990s raised concerns among the main security agencies—that is, The National Police (Policía Nacional), Civil Guard (Guardia Civil), and the Intelligence Service (Centro Nacional de Inteligencia). Nonetheless, the commitment to confront Islamist terrorism became stronger as a result of the terrorist attacks in the United States of 9/11, and most definitely after the atrocity perpetrated in Madrid in 2004. In fact, the attacks in the United States led to a slight increase in police personnel, followed by another small boost after the 2003 Casablanca terrorists' attacks in neighboring Morocco. In these few years, the Spanish National Police increased its capacities by 25 percent, forming up to 70 specialists on Islamist terrorism and doubling those who concentrated on the Maghreb region, which was regarded as the main area of threat.²⁹ At the same time, the Civil Guard also increased its specialists on the subject, although the 60 experts available then were still regarded as insufficient. Despite these efforts, police and intelligence personnel, including translators, could always benefit from a more generous increase, with initiatives aimed at preventing the radicalization and terror group recruitment still scarce. It was only after Spain had suffered the loss of almost 200 people on March 11 that a broader counterterrorist framework was put into place. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, different measures were announced by the newly elected Spanish government. The scope of these initiatives coincided with the objectives set out by the European Union's strategy for combating terrorism and the radicalization and recruitment of individuals: Disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism; ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism; and more vigorously promote security, justice, democracy, and opportunity for all.³⁰ The measures implemented by the Spanish authorities in order to fulfill these objectives can be divided into five different sections, which will be now examined.

Increase in Intelligence Capabilities

The fact that, previous to the massacre perpetrated in Madrid, many of the terrorist suspects involved in the March 11 attacks had already been under investigation in the course of other investigations exposed serious shortfalls that had to be confronted. In fact, the judicial investigation contained detailed transcriptions of telephone conversations of some of the

suspects that were taped by Spanish police only days before the terrorist attack. Undoubtedly, “mistakes” were made, as the security minister at the time of the attacks acknowledged shortly after. The limited human and material resources available seriously constrained the work of the main security agencies, thus a significant increase was announced immediately after the attacks. The increase in translators was particularly relevant in the aftermath of the atrocity, given the surprisingly small number of professionals who were devoted to such an important part of the investigation process. The limited number of translators had significantly hampered previous investigations to the extent that on a few occasions, some recordings of terrorist suspects were not translated because of the lack of a professional who could speak the particular language required. The vast amount of dialects and unfamiliar cultural and social codes constitute important barriers for a better understanding of the current terrorist phenomenon and the activities of individuals under investigation, thus the absolute necessity of incorporating not only translators but also police and agents who are capable of working within the communities of concern. The complex access to what are already very closed clusters remains a daunting task that will require a coherent policy for the recruitment of translators, subject specialists, and security personnel qualified to work in such an environment, as well as members of minority groups, preferably from a second generation.

Between 2004 and 2005, 600 new policemen were allocated to the fight against Islamist terrorism, and 300 more were trained with the intention of having over 1,000 specialists in this particular area, which requires important expertise and specific knowledge that has not been traditionally available. In the following years, as the ETA's terrorism decreased, more resources were allocated to the fight against Islamist terrorism. This increase was aimed at improving the quantity and the quality of intelligence, requiring more informers, undercover, and infiltration agents, and better technical means for intercepting communications and conducting surveillance and scientific investigations. Intelligence gathering and the exploitation of a wide variety of sources—with the intention of providing accurate threat assessments and a fruitful response analysis—require vast and efficient resources. Counterterrorism requires a huge amount of information to be processed and carefully analyzed by competent staff.

The Spanish intelligence service began recruiting 300 new members, with the view of having 1,000 new agents within the next few years. As with the police forces, the intelligence service also allocated more operatives to this type of terrorism as the ETA's terrorism decreased to the point that in 2011 the terrorist group declared the end of its violent campaign.

The limited presence of police and intelligence personnel abroad was also a problem that the authorities began to address in the period after the March 2004 terrorist attacks. Police representatives were dispatched to key areas such as Pakistan, Syria, Libya, Algeria, Jordan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. However, such a welcomed effort cannot obscure the fact that the presence abroad of the Spanish intelligence service still consists of only 10 percent of its resources.

Judicial and police investigations before and after March 11 have revealed strong connections between terrorism and other criminal activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling, and robbery. Such a pattern was recognized in 1995 by the then head of Britain's MI5, Stella Rimmington, who expressed how worrying it was to see a marked increase of activities related to organized and serious crime, indicating the need to look for countermeasures similar to the ones that would be required against terrorist networks, among them more robust cooperation among security agencies at a national and international level as well as better coordination and assistance among governments.³¹ Such a development would also have implications for models of analysis, advising a more thorough approach that would take into account the aforementioned close relationship between terrorism and crime. This is particularly relevant to the Spanish experience, as revealed by the fact that criminal networks have been involved in the preparation and support of terrorist operations such as March 11. To this extent, the Centre of Intelligence for Organised Crime (CICO) was created in 2006 in order to enhance investigations on this important type of criminality and its links with terrorism.

Improvement and Enhancement of Coordination

Intelligence, together with coordination, constituted one of the main pillars of counterterrorism in the fight against the Basque nationalist terrorist group ETA, and remain key elements of the counterterrorist framework against Islamist terrorism. Coordination among the different security agencies involved in counterterrorism remains a very important challenge. In an attempt to improve this type of coordination, a new National Center for the Coordination of Anti-Terrorism (Centro Nacional de Coordinación Antiterrorista, CNCA) was created in May 2004. Following in the steps of the Joint Terrorism Analysis Center created in the United Kingdom, the CNCA's main aim is to receive, process, and assess strategic information available from various sources and agencies, thus integrating information from the main security forces and the intelligence service. The center is composed of representatives of the two main police forces and the

intelligence service, and one of its main objectives is to provide an effective exchange of information through the correct management of databases. Although progress has been made in the development of such a center during the short time since its creation, very important challenges still lay ahead. On one hand, threat assessment has become a dominant activity for the center, producing analyses that have very little impact on the operational level. As police officers acknowledge themselves, this limitation—that stems from the nature of the information handled, which usually lacks a strong operational component—prevents common investigations from becoming more frequent and effective. Traditionally, the main agencies have been very reluctant to share information, leading to mistakes that on occasion have seriously endangered the lives of personnel engaged in antiterrorist operations. Nonetheless, the CNCA has been a key player in developing the Spanish counterradicalization strategy providing very important and useful analysis for policy makers. In 2015 the Spanish government announced the unification of the CNCA and CICO into one center called CITCO (Center of Intelligence against Terrorism and Organised Crime) with the aim of improving efficiency in this field.

Coordination between security agencies is also required between different countries, given the nature of the current threat faced by our societies. The transnational nature of Islamist terrorism means that internal security relies heavily on good cooperation and coordination with other countries where terrorists may plan their operations or develop their support networks with the aim of dispatching individuals abroad for the commission of attacks. Therefore, the necessary cooperation between police agencies both internally and externally must be complemented with effective coordination on the political and judicial level. To this extent, the reluctance to share sensitive information raises important obstacles that are not only limited to the domestic level but very common beyond this dimension. The increasing need for better and wider cooperation (as well as coordination) on a European level has been slowed down by obvious technical difficulties which have prevented a more thorough harmonization of tools and procedures.³² Further, the unwillingness to engage in initiatives that may entail (or be perceived as) diminishing national sovereignty, as would be the case in an area such as security, has been characteristic of the way in which many European countries have approached this issue. This attitude has prevented a more decisive collective action, which has also been hindered by different perceptions about the terrorist threat and the response to it. The seriousness of the problem is not perceived in the same way by members of the European Union, with different experiences of Islamist terrorism shaping their understanding and concern of the phenomenon in

different ways. Such an acknowledgement led a group of five European partners—Spain, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy—to meet periodically with the view of seeking ways to overcome the obstacles that prevent more effective cooperation and coordination on the areas outlined. The initiatives being considered by the group (initially known as the G5, but later on referred to as the G6 after the addition of Poland in 2006) included the elaboration of a list of terrorist suspects that could be shared by the country members, exposing the legal difficulties that the implementation of such a useful measure raise and the challenges still ahead in the struggle for better coordination. The complexity around this issue is even more evident when efforts are directed toward the improvement of coordination between European and Arab countries, a necessary objective of particular relevance to Spain, given its geo-strategic situation, which has led authorities to increase various initiatives in that direction.

Legislative Reforms

The Spanish protracted fight against terrorism during the previous 30 years provided the country with a legal framework originally designed in 1977 when the National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*) was established in Madrid in order to deal with serious organized crime and terrorist offences. Various reforms of the Penal Code over the years introduced new terrorist offences to the extent that after the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004, political and judicial authorities concluded that the legal framework already in existence did not require further amendments in order to properly confront Islamist terrorism. This was indeed the case, with the exception of new provisions introduced with the aim of strengthening the control of explosives. The fact that ordinary criminals had been able to steal a considerable amount of explosives from a mine in the north of Spain, and subsequently sold this to the terrorists responsible for perpetrating the March 11 attacks, demonstrated worrying shortfalls in a country that should have been particularly concerned about the need to avoid such a serious break of security given the terrorist threat posed by the ETA, a terrorist organization in constant search for supply of this type of material.

Other legislation amendments aimed at strengthening the control of private activities have been considered over the last few years but have failed to materialize thus far. Among these new legal provisions there is particular concern about the need to develop legislation on telecommunications, with the intention of achieving better cooperation from operators and the identification of prepaid cards for use with mobile phones in order to properly identify callers. The importance of mobile phones and phone

conversations in police and judicial investigations related to Islamist terrorism has to be stressed, since the tracking of suspects has been greatly facilitated by the monitoring of an individual's movements and location. Given the importance that the Internet has acquired as a means of communications as well as radicalization and recruitment of individuals susceptible to be involved in terrorist activities, amendments to the 1999 Data Protection Law have also been assessed so as to demand from Internet providers that data from users is held for a year. At the same time, preexisting legislation has also been reinforced and extended in order to include stricter mechanisms of control aimed at preventing financial institutions from conducting operations that may aid terrorist activities or organized crime. New types of offenses were introduced in the Spanish Penal Code in 2010 with the aim of strengthening the legal framework. Consequently, the spread of radical contents was included as an offense and the definition of terrorism widened.³³ In 2015 a new reform of penal code was passed introducing new offenses like the "passive training" of radicals and tougher sentences for crimes related to violent radicalisation.

Protection of Targets and Response

A response plan (Plan Operativo de Lucha contra el Terrorismo) was developed after March 11, contemplating the participation of the Spanish Army (should it be required) in protecting strategic installations ranging from communications networks to energy or nuclear facilities. The protection of big events and the monitoring of bus stations, train stations, ports, and airports is of particular relevance once the program is activated as a result of a terrorist alert or threat. This plan has been activated on various occasions during the last few years coinciding with the holiday season, when massive concentrations of civilians are more common, and in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in London in July 7, 2005. In order to complement this program, the Army and the Civil Guard have also increased their capabilities and preparedness in advance of a nonconventional terrorist attack. Thus, the supplies of several vaccines have been considerably increased, and the Civil Guard has designed a special plan for the prevention of and reaction to threats and attacks involving nuclear, radiological, biological, and/or chemical components. The measures implemented in this area were also complemented with a new plan for the protection of critical infrastructure.

Spain has also introduced regulations requesting that commercial airlines provide the authorities with a list of passengers on international flights.³⁴ Moreover, a new information system is being developed with the intention

of improving the quality and the amount of data on people who wish to enter the country. This is nonetheless a difficult task given the open nature of borders within the Schengen area (in which 26 European countries have abolished passports and any other type of border control at their common borders). Spain's geographical location—acting as a bridge between Europe and North Africa, where radical Islamism is particularly strong—as well as the constant flux of immigrants from such an underdeveloped region, has demonstrated the complexity of a much necessary duty such as border control, which still remains a key challenge to the country's authorities.

Prevention of Radicalization and Recruitment

Apart from the measures previously described, there have been several more specific initiatives aimed at dealing with one of the key issues regarding counterterrorism. The awareness of the relevance that the processes of radicalization and recruitment have in the fight against terrorism has increased in the last few years, as demonstrated (for instance) by the European Union's growing concern for these issues as illustrated by different statements on this issue since December 2004, when the European Council agreed to elaborate a strategy and action plan to address this problem.³⁵ The decision by the European Commission to appoint a group of experts to provide policy advice on fighting violent radicalization is in line with this concern.³⁶

Spain's initiatives in relation to radicalization and recruitment can be defined as multifaceted, thus requiring the participation of different ministries in its design and implementation. Responses coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior do share a common objective, which is the improvement of the relationship between the authorities and the Muslim community in Spain and its main representatives. Although the Spanish state and the Islamic Commission of Spain did sign a cooperation agreement in 1992, in which important aspects of the relationship between Muslims and the authorities were articulated,³⁷ many of the issues covered by such a text were not fully developed. The Office of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Justice, as the body in charge of the preparation, coordination, and implementation of the government's policy on religious matters (including relations with Muslim communities) has been responsible for the assessment and development of this agreement. Thus, the office is in charge of the register of religious entities, communication with federations and bodies regarded as representatives of Muslim communities, and the judicial aspects derived from the relationship between Muslims and the state.

By way of example, in the last few years the office has managed to stabilize the situation of imams who lacked social security benefits, offering them the possibility of regularizing their situation in the country. It should be remembered that preaching is one of the factors that may influence individuals in order to embrace opinions, views, and ideas that could lead to acts of terrorism. Therefore, it is important to monitor those responsible for it, while enabling moderate preachers to fulfill their jobs by lessening the difficulties that may arise for them from a legal point of view. As part of such a process, it has been decided that permits of residence will be issued for imams as a result of their religious activity, which is considered a professional one. Such a development is seen as much more effective than the control of speeches by imams made in mosques—an approach that was contemplated at some point by the authorities, but was never implemented following the wide criticism that resulted when originally proposed shortly after the terrorist attacks in Madrid on March 11. The rejection of such a measure stems from the technical difficulties of its implementation, as well as from the restrictions to freedom of speech that it would have entailed, as corroborated by the fact that amendments to the current legislation would have been required if finally introduced.

As with other previous terrorist expressions of nationalist ideology, the role of the communities of reference is particularly relevant when confronting violence perpetrated by individuals who espouse a radical and fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. Experience demonstrates that the required delegitimization and condemnation of violence by the majority of a community's members will prevent terrorists from increasing their social support.³⁸ This is a necessary but insufficient precondition for terrorism to remain a phenomenon confined to a minority. Therefore, counterterrorism also needs to include measures that encourage such condemnation and delegitimization, which is particularly efficient when coming from political or religious leaders who are respected in the community, and are thus able to exert a positive influence on other members of that particular section of the population.³⁹ What has been defined as the “battle of hearts and minds” can also be regarded as part of the counterterrorist framework against Islamist terrorism, inspiring initiatives like the ones already described or the fatwa issued against Osama bin Laden by the main Islamic religious authorities in Spain after March 11, measures that have also been complemented by some other actions on the communication front. As a result, contacts have intensified with Muslim communities as well as with Arab media and governments in the Arab world. Different Spanish governments have engaged in a type of public diplomacy aimed at better explaining to a wide Arab audience its foreign policy, the country's realities and its

policies on issues such as immigration as well as other areas with the potential of becoming mobilization factors for certain individuals. To this extent, of particular significance remains the role played by certain Arab media services, whose particular coverage and interpretation of current affairs contributes to the strengthening of solidarity bonds between Muslims throughout the world by the portrayal of a globally victimized and humiliated Muslim community. Violence polarizes and forces audiences to take part by choosing either the side of the victims or that of the terrorist. Therefore, the media provide "identification mechanisms" since "the terrorist's invitation to identification is brought home to us by the public and the private media."⁴⁰ It has proved extremely difficult so far to confront that dimension as well as the increasingly powerful influence of the Internet for individuals who can easily access sites where violence in the name of Islam is not only justified but actively and strongly encouraged.

Finally, the Spanish government has also introduced some measures with the intention of preventing the radicalization and recruitment of incarcerated individuals.⁴¹ The dismantling of a terrorist cell inside one of Spain's prisons and the evidence of other cases where radicalization of prisoners have occurred led the authorities to opt in November 2004 for the dispersal of those inmates who were linked to jihadist terrorism, allocating them in 30 different centers. The dispersal of prisoners constitutes an important policy adopted in the mid-1980s to confront the ETA's terrorism. It has been maintained since then, given its effectiveness in preventing the association of members of the same organization that would strengthen the group's pressure over the individual, raising obstacles in the process of disengagement from the terrorist organization, and also increasing the chances of posing various challenges to the prison authorities. With such a background, the dispersal of prisoners associated with jihadist terrorism was also seen as a very positive initiative, although the outcome could vary as a result of the key differences between these types of terrorism. The dispersal of individuals linked to jihadist terrorism may actually enable them to contact other inmates with the potential of being radicalized and recruited. Whereas the nationalist ideology espoused by the ETA's activists was unlikely to be an effective tool for the indoctrination of other prison inmates with no connection with the terrorist organization, given the sheer rejection of the ETA's objectives by the majority of the Spanish prison population, the same could not be said of Islamism, when conveniently manipulated as a means for justifying extremism. The search for new recruits by jihadist terrorists has often extended to marginal groups and crime circles, where individuals are prone to accept ideological doctrines that help their criminal acts to be seen in a different light. In other

words, a radical interpretation of Islam may become a useful instrument to justify previous and further transgressions, shielding the individual from his own self-questioning and criticism that usually ensues decisions that generate negative consequences. The prison environment could provide a facilitational context for such a course of action, and this requires proper management if further processes of radicalization are to be prevented. This risk has led prison authorities to apply a tight control of communications of certain inmates, in addition to the measures previously described in this chapter.

Overall, Spain's long struggle with terrorism helped prepare it for an effective response to the events of March 11. However, changes made since those attacks have clearly helped improve the country's ability to face the challenges it now confronts in the form of Islamist extremism.

Notes

1. Although it is very plausible to believe that Al Qaeda ordered the terrorist attack perpetrated on March 11, the judicial and police investigations conducted by the Spanish authorities were unable to conclusively establish that the order to perpetrate the attack came directly from the leadership of the terrorist organization led then by Osama bin Laden. Academic Bruce Hoffman has rightly concluded: "While both the 2005 London bombings and 2006 airline bomb have been conclusively linked to Core Al Qaeda, its links to the Madrid attack—although suspected—have never satisfactorily been established." Bruce Hoffman, "Al Qaeda's Uncertain Future," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36 (2008): 649. For two thorough analyses of the network involved in March 11, see Fernando Reinares, *¡Matadlos! Quién estuvo detrás del 11 M y por qué se atentó en España* (Madrid: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2014); and J. Jordán, F. Mañas, and N. Horsburgh, "Strengths and Weaknesses of Grassroot Jihadist Networks: The Madrid Bombings," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31 (2008): 17–39.

2. *El País*, March 3, 2002.

3. Javier Valenzuela, *España en el punto de mira. La amenaza del integrismo islámico* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2002), 64.

4. Rogelio Alonso, "The Madrid Bombings and Negotiations with ETA: A Case Study of the Impact of Terrorism in Spanish Politics," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25, no. 1 (2013): 113–36.

5. David Rapoport and Leonard Weinberg, "Elections and Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 12 (2000): 15–50.

6. Rogelio Alonso, "El nuevo terrorismo: factores de cambio y permanencia," in *Madrid 11-M. Un análisis del mal y sus consecuencias*, ed. Amalio Blanco, Rafael del Águila, and José Manuel Sabucedo (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2005), 143–46.

7. In fact some authors argue that opinion polls held in advance of the terrorist attack already indicated that the difference between the party in power and the

socialist party was narrowing to the extent that a victory for the latter did not look unlikely. See Julián Santamaría, "El azar y el contexto," *Claves de Razón Práctica* 146 (2004): 28–40; and Ignacio Lago Peñas and José Ramón Montero, "Los mecanismos del cambio electoral. Del 11-M al 14-M," *Claves de Razón Práctica* 149 (2005): 36–45.

8. Fernando Reinares, "Al Qaeda, neosalafistas magrebies y 11-M: sobre el nuevo terrorismo islamista en España," in *El nuevo terrorismo islamista. Del 11-S al 11-M*, ed. Fernando Reinares and Antonio Elorza (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2004), 36–37.

9. *Mayrit*, the term used by the terrorist in the recording, is the old Arab name used to refer to Madrid.

10. Tareq ben Ziad is the name of the Muslim leader who crossed the strait of Gibraltar when centuries ago Spain was conquered by the Arabs.

11. Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 6, Audiencia Nacional, Madrid, Sumario N° 20/2004, Madrid, Auto, April 10, 2006, 336.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Juzgado Central de Instrucción N° 005, Madrid, Sumario (Proc. Ordinario) 0000035/2001 E, September 17, 2003. In September 2005 a total of 18 men were sentenced by the Spanish National Court after magistrates found them guilty of membership and collaboration with Al Qaeda. Abu Dahdah was sentenced to 27 years in prison, accused of leading a terrorist organization and conspiring to perpetrate the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001. In June 2006 the Spanish Supreme Court reduced to 12 years this sentence after qualifying that although Abu Dahdah was definitely a member of a terrorist organization, he did not take part in the preparation of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in the United States in 2001. The 2005 judicial verdict stated that the men found guilty had engaged over a prolonged period of time, which in some cases went back as far as 1995, in activities of indoctrination and proselytizing, financing terrorist cells in different countries all over the world, as well as recruiting mujahideen in order to send them to conflict spots abroad.

14. *Abc*, March 6, 2005.

15. Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 6, Audiencia Nacional, Madrid, Sumario N° 20/2004, Madrid, Auto, April 10, 2006, 284–85.

16. *Ibid.*, 339–40.

17. Cortes Generales, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados, Comisión de Investigación, Año 2004 VIII, Legislatura Núm. 7, Sesión núm. 13, July 19, 2004.

18. Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 6, Audiencia Nacional, Madrid, Sumario N° 20/2004, Madrid, Auto, April 10, 2006, 230–31.

19. *Ibid.*, 516. These letters are very similar to letters written by suicide terrorists in other regions of the world in advance of their deaths.

20. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on March 11, security personnel at the U.S. embassy in Spain realized that Berraj had been seen in the surroundings of the building located in the center of Madrid, fearing that he had been scouting

in preparation for a terrorist attack against such a significant and symbolic target.

21. See for example the testimony of Ignacio Astarloa before the commission set up by the Spanish Parliament to investigate the March 11 attacks. Astarloa was at the time of the attacks a minister in charge of security. Cortes Generales, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados, Comisiones de Investigación, Año 2004, VIII Legislatura Núm. 18, Sesión Núm. 31, November 18, 2004.

22. *El Mundo*, June 21, 2005.

23. Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 6, Audiencia Nacional, Madrid, Sumario N° 20/2004, Madrid, Auto, April 10, 2006, 1206–7.

24. *El País*, June 9, 2002.

25. It is believed that the cost of the explosives may not have exceeded 45,000 Euros (US\$56,870). In addition to this, terrorists incurred other expenses in the purchase of different properties used for the preparation of the attacks and with the intention of providing refuge, as well as the acquisition of mobile phones and cards to activate them. Juzgado Central de Instrucción Número 6, Audiencia Nacional, Madrid, Sumario N° 20/2004, Madrid, Auto, April 10, 2006, 1137.

26. José María Irujo, *El agujero. España invadida por la yihad* (Madrid: Aguilar, 2005), 195.

27. *Ibid.*, 164.

28. *Terrorist Activity in the European Union: Situation and Trends Report (TE-SAT) October 2002–15 October 2003*, 37.

29. Testimony by Jesús de la Morena, senior police officer responsible for counterterrorism, given before the Commission of Enquiry set up by the Spanish Parliament to investigate the March 11 attacks. Cortes Generales. Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados. Comisiones de Investigación, Año 2004, VIII Legislatura Núm. 3, Sesión núm. 7, July 7, 2004.

30. “The European Union Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism,” Council of the European Union, Brussels, November 24, 2005, 14781/1/05 REV 1, JAI 452 ENFOPOL 164, COTER 81.

31. Quoted in Ronald D. Crelinsten and Iffet Özkut, “Counterterrorism Policy in Fortress Europe: Implications for Human Rights,” in *European Democracies Against Terrorism. Governmental Policies and Intergovernmental Cooperation*, ed. Fernando Reinares (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 249.

32. For more on the challenges of European intelligence collaboration, please see Magnus Norell, “Intelligence Coordination and Counterterrorism: A European Perspective,” in *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century*, ed. James J. F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007).

33. See for example María Ponte, “La reforma del Código Penal en relación a los delitos de terrorismo,” María Ponte, Grupo de Estudios en Seguridad Internacional, 2010, <http://www.seguridadinternacional.es/?q=es/content/la-reforma-del-c%C3%B3digo-penal-en-relaci%C3%B3n-los-delitos-de-terrorismo>.

34. “Batería de medidas,” Jorge Rodríguez, *El País*, January 8, 2006.

35. Council of the European Union, 14894/04 (Presse 332), Press Release, 26th Council Meeting, Justice and Home Affairs, Brussels, December 2, 2004. See also on this issue "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Concerning Terrorist Recruitment: Addressing the Factors Contributing to Violent Radicalisation," Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, September 21, 2005, COM (2005) 313 final.

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